



*Johannes Honv. v. D. M.*





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THE  
**Living Temple:**  
OR, A  
*Designed Improvement*  
Of that NOTION that  
A GOOD MAN  
IS THE  
**TEMPLE of GOD.**

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PART I.

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Concerning God's Existence, and his  
Conversableness with Man.

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Against Atheism, or the Epicurean Deism.

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By JOHN HOWE, M. A. Minister of the  
Gospel, and sometime Fellow of M. C. Oxon.

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LONDON.

Printed for R. C. and Sold by John Lawrence, at the Angel  
in the Poultry, over-against the Compter. 1702.

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LONDON:  
Printed for R. C. and Sold by John Lawrence, in the Strand  
in the Parish of St. Martin in the Vintry, 1707.

To the Right Honourable,

**WILLIAM,**  
**Lord P A G E T T,**

Baron of *Beaufort* in the  
County of *Stafford*.

*My Honoured Lord,*

**I** Have not the Opportunity  
of begging Your Lordship's  
*foregoing Leave* to prefix  
Your Name to these Papers; but  
despair not of Your *following*  
*Pardon*. Your Name must be  
acknowledged Great, through  
two potent Empires, *Christian*,  
and *Mahometan*; and the Servi-  
ces greater, which You have  
done to many that may perhaps  
not have heard the sound of  
Your Name. Your Prudent and  
Prosperous Negotiations in the  
*Austrian* and *Ottoman* Courts,

A 3                      have

have obliged Multitudes, whose *better Genius* hath taught them more to value themselves, than to think they were born to Slavery ; from which You have found Means, in great part, to save *Europe* ; *Somewhere*, by charming *Great Power*, so as to conquer the *Inclination* to use it to so ill a purpose ; *Elsewhere*, by preventing its *Increase*, where that *Inclination* was invincible. And hereby You have dignify'd *England*, in letting it be seen, what it can signify in the *World* ; when it is so happy, to have its *Interest* managed by a fit and able *Hand*.

Yet that knowledge Your Lordship hath heretofore allowed me to have of You, cannot suffer me to think, You will account *Your Name* too great, to patronize the *Cause* asserted in the following *Discourse* : That it is unpolish'd, will not affect Your Lord-



Lordship; Let that rest where it ought: The *Subject* and *Design*, will, I doubt not, have Your Lordship's Countenance. And the rather, that it is not the *Temple* of *this*, or *that Party*, that is here defended, which would little agree to the Amplitude of Your Lordship's large Mind, and Your great knowledge of the World, but that wherein *Mankind* have a *common concern*. A Temple that is the Seat of Serious living Religion, is the more Venerable, and the more Extensive; the more Defensible, and the more worthy to be Defended, by how much it is the less appropriate to this or that *Sect*, and *sort of Men*, or distinguish'd by this or that affected, modifying Form. That which according to its primitive Designation may be hoped, and ought, to be the resort of *all Nations*: Which



it is vain to imagine, *any one*, of *this or that External Form*, not prescribed by God himself, can ever be; unless we should suppose it possible, that *one* and the *same Humane Prince, or Power*, could ever come to govern the World. *Such Uniformity*, must certainly suppose such an *Universal Monarchy*, as never was, and we easily apprehend can never be. Therefore *the Belief*, that the *Christian Religion* shall ever become *the Religion of the World*; And the *Christian Church* become the common universal *Temple of Mankind*. That *the Mountain of the Lord's House* shall be established on the *top of the Mountains*, and all *Nations* flow to it; (as, besides that, many other *Texts of Holy Scripture* do plainly speak) and an intemperate contentious Zeal for one *External, Humane Form of God's Temple* on Earth, are down-  
right

*The Epistle Dedicatory.*

v

*right Inconsistencies. That Belief, and this Zeal, must destroy one another; especially, that shall make particular Temples, Engins to batter down each other, because they agree not in some Humane Additionals, tho' all may be charitably suppos'd to have somewhat of Divine Life in them. Therefore we plainly see, that this Universal, Christian, Living Temple must be formed and finished, not by Humane Might or Power, but by the Spirit of the Living God; which Spirit, poured forth, shall instruct Princes, and the Potentates of the World, to receive, and cherish, among their Subjects, the great Essentials of Christian Religion, and whatsoever is of plain Divine Revelation, wherein all may agree, respecting, or leaving arbitrary, the little Humane Additaments, about which there is so much disagreement.*

*Heaven*

Heaven did favour us with *such a King*: And thanks be to God, that he hath given us *such a Queen*, who is not for destroying any Temples that may have true vital Religion in them, because they neither all have, or have not, the same Pinnacles, or other Pieces of Ornature alike. God grant all *Christian Princes*, and *Powers*, may herein equally imitate them *both*; as many do seriously lament the loss of the *Former*.

It hath been long the Honour of Your Family to have had great Esteem and Reverence for *such a Temple*. And I doubt not, but its having spread its Branches into divers other worthy Families of the *Hampdens*, *Foleys*, *Ashbursts*, *Hunts*, hath given Your Lordship much the more *grateful and complacential View*; for their *Affinity* to *Your Own*, in this respect. A Temple so *truly*, (and even *only*)

August,

*August, and Great*, spreads a Glory over the Families, Kingdoms, and Nations where it can have place. What is *here written* is a *mean Oblation*, for the Service of *this Temple*; but acceptable, as even Goats-Hair was, by *being consecrated*, with a sincere Mind, for the use of the Tabernacle of old.

The *First Part* betakes it self to Your Lordship as *an Orphan*, upon the decease of its *former Patron*: In hope of some sort of a *post-liminary* Reception. And for the *Second Part*, it is (as Your Lordship shall vouchsafe to receive it) *Originally and Entirely Yours*.

The *Former*, Your Lordship will see, had a *former Dedication*. And I cannot think it will be displeasing to Your Lordship, that I let it stand. For tho' it may seem somewhat uncouth, and unusual, to have two such Epistles

stles come so near one another; yet the *Unfashionableness* hereof, I conceive, will in Your Lordship's Judgment be over-ballanced by Considerations of a preponderating weight, that are suggested to the Reader: While, in the mean time, I cannot suppose it unacceptable to Your Lordship, that a Person of true worth in his time, Related to the same County in which Your Lordship hath so considerable Concerns, and not altogether unrelated to Your self, should have had a Participation with You, in the same sort of Patronage; with whom Your Lordship hath also a true Participation, in all the Honour, Esteem, and Sincere Prayers that ever were conceived for him by

*Your Lordship's most Obedient, and*

*most Devoted, Humble Servant,*

John Howe.



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## Advertisement.

Reader,

**B**E pleased to take notice, that the former Part of this Work, having been heretofore In-scrib'd to that worthy Person, Sir John Skeffington of Fisherwick in Staffordshire, Baronet: And who was at that time also, Viscount Lord Masserene, Governour of the County of London-Derry, and one of the Lords of his (then) Majesty Charles the Second's most Honourable Privy Council in the Kingdom of Ireland; and now, since, deceased;

I have, however, thought fit to let it be Reprinted, the Incongruity being



being, by this Advertisement, avoided, of making an Address anew, in this new Impression, to one no longer in our World; That the Memory of a Person so truly Valuable, may (so far as this can contribute thereto) be preserved; And because also, many things in this Epistle, may be usefull, as a Preface, to shew the Design of the following Discourse. For which purpose, that may be equally serv'd by it as it is, the other purpose being also, thus, better serv'd; I have not judg'd it necessary (tho' that had been easie) to alter the Form. Which was as follows.

Although

**A**lthough I am not, My Lord, without the apprehension that a Temple ought to have another sort of Dedication, yet I have no such pique at the custom of former days, but that I can think it decent and just, a Discourse concerning one (conceiv'd under your Roof, and born out of your House) should openly own the relation which it thereby hath, and the Authors great Obligations to your Lordship;

And can upon this account, easily perswade my self (though that custom hath much given place to this latter one) not to be so fashionable, as even to write in Masquerade.

It were indeed most unbecoming in the service of so noble a Cause, to act in disguise, or decline to tell one's name. And as the prefixing  
the

the so obscure one which the Title Page bears, will be without suspicion of a design, to recompense, by the authority of a name, any feared weakness of the Cause it self. So were it very unworthy (having nothing better) to grudge the bringing, even so mean a thing, as a Sacrifice to the door of the Temple.

And although your Lordships is of so incomparably greater value; yet also, is it (as the equity of the case requires) expos'd with less hazzard; since in common account, the vouchsafement of pardon (whereof I cannot despair) for such assumed liberty, can with no justice be understood to import more than only a favourable aspect on the design, without any interest or participation in the disrepute of its ill management. So that your Honour is in no more jeopardy than the  
main

*main cause it self, which is but little concerned in the successfulness or miscarriage of this or that effort, which is made on behalf of it. And which, you are secure, can receive no real damage. For the Foundations of this Temple are more stable than those of Heaven and Earth, it being built upon that Rock against which the gates of Hell can never prevail.*

*And if, in any unforeseen state of things, you should ever receive prejudice, or incur danger, by any real service you should design unto the Temple of God, your adventure would be the more honourable, by how much it were more hazardous; The Order of Templars, your Lordship well knows, was not, in former days reckoned in-glorious.*

*But*

But as this Temple is quite of another constitution and make than that at Jerusalem, and (to use those words of the Sacred Writer)

ἀλλήγουμένη, τὰς αἰσῶν & ταῦτ' αἰσῶν.

So what is requisite to the interest and service of it, is much of another nature. Entire devotedness to God, sincerity, humility, charity, refinedness from the dross and baseness of the earth, strict sobriety, dominion of ones self, mastery over impotent and ignominious passions, love of justice, a steady propension to do good, delight in doing it, have contributed more to the security and beauty of Gods Temple on earth; conferr'd on it more majesty and lustre; done more to procure it room and reverence among men, than the most prosperous violence ever did. The building up of this Temple even to the laying on the Top-stone (to be followed with the



acclamations of Grace, Grace) being that which must be done, not by might or power, but by the Spirit of the Lord. Which, in as much as the structure is spiritual, and to be situated, and raised up in the mind or spirit of man, works in order to it, in a way suitable thereto. That is, verymuch by soft and gentle insinuations, unto which are subservient the self recommending amiableness, and comely aspect of Religion; the discernable gratefulness, and uniform course of such in whom it bears rule, and is a settled living Law. Hereby the hearts of others are captivated and won to look towards it; made not only desirous to taste its delights: but, in order thereto, patient also of its rigours, and the rougher severities, which their drowsie security, and unmortified lusts do require should accompany it; the



more deeply and thoroughly to at-  
temper and form them to it. Meerly  
notional discourses about the Temple  
of God, and the external forms be-  
longing to it (how useful soever they  
be in their own kind and order) be-  
ing unaccompanied with the life  
and power whereto they should be  
adjoyned, either as subservient  
helps, or comely expressions thereof,  
do gain but little to it in the esti-  
mation of discerning men.

Much more have the apparently  
useless and unintelligible notions,  
with the empty formalities, too ar-  
bitrarily affixt to it, by a very great  
(viz. the unreformed) part of the  
Christian world, even there exposed  
it to contempt, where the professed  
(but most irrational and hopeless)  
design hath been, to draw to it respect  
and veneration.

And

*And when these have become matter of strife, and fill'd the world with noise and clamour, through the imperious violence of some, and the factious turbulency of others; it hath made it look with a frightful aspect, and rendred the Divine Presence so represented, an undesired dreadful thing. And may make that the language of fear, with some, (which is of enmity, with the most) depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.*

*Most of all; when a glorying in these things, and contention about them is joyned with gross immoralities; either manifest impiety, sensual debaucheries, acts of open injustice, or the (no less criminal) evil, of a proud wrathful ungovernable temper of spirit. This hath made it a most hateful thing in the eyes of God and men, and turn-*

ed that which should be the  
 house of Prayer unto all nations  
 into a den of robbers: *Hath cast*  
*the most opprobrious contumely up-*  
*on him whom they would entitle*  
*the owner of it. That is, when*  
*men will steal, murder, commit*  
*adultery, swear falsely, oppress the*  
*stranger, the fatherless and the*  
*widow ; and yet cry the Temple*  
*of the Lord, the Temple of the*  
*Lord, &c. 'Tis as if they would*  
*make the world believe, the Holy*  
*God, the great lover and patron*  
*of Purity and Peace, had erected,*  
*on purpose, an house on earth, to be*  
*the common harbour and sanctuary*  
*of the vilest of men, the very Pests*  
*of humane Society, and disturbers*  
*of mankind.*

*And if they were not the very*  
*worst, yet how absurd and senseless*  
*a thing were it, that he should be*  
*thought to appropriate a people to*  
*himself*

himself, have them solemnly baptized into his name, and trained up in a professed belief of those his more peculiar Revelations; which are without the common notice of the most; and in the use of certain (somewhat different) external institutes: Being yet content that in all things else, they be but just like the rest of the world.

Though he may be, for some time, patient of this indignity, and connive at such a state and posture of things. (As he did a great while towards the Jews of old) Yet, that this should be thought the top of his design, and the thing he lastly aimed at, and would acquiesce in, supposes such a notion of God, as than which, worshipping a stock were not more foolish and impious; and professed Atheism as rational and innocent.

*This hath spoil'd and flurr'd the glory of the Christian Temple, the most august and magnificent the world hath (and which, indeed only, hath right to the name) made the Religion of Christians look like an empty vanity, and appear, for many ages, but as an external badge of civil distinction between them, and another sort of men, that are only contending for enlarging of Empire, and who shall grasp most power into their hands. Both having also their sub-distinguishing marks besides, under which too probably divers of those who have adjoyned themselves to the so differenced parties, furiously drive at the same design. And these zealously pretend for Religion and the Temple of God; when, in the meantime, it were a thing perfectly indifferent (even in it self, as well as in the opinion of the persons concern'd.)*



cern'd) what Religion or way they were of, true or false, right or wrong, Paganish, Mahometan, Jewish, Christian, Popish, Protestant, Lutheran, Calvinistical, Episcopal, Presbyterial, Independent, &c. Supposing there be any of each of these denominations that place their Religion in nothing else, but a meer assent to the peculiar opinions, and an observation of the external formalities of their own party. And that they never go further, but remain finally alienated from the life of God, and utter strangers to the soul refining-governing power of the true Religion. Only that their case is the worse the nearer they approach, in profession, to the Truth.

And really, if we abstract from the design and end, the spirit and life, the tranquillity and pleasure of Religion, one would heartily wonder



wonder what men can see in all the rest, for which they can think it worth the while to contend, to the disquieting themselves and the world. No body can believe they regard the Authority of God, in this Doctrine or Institution, rather than another, who neglect, and resist, the substance and main scope of Religion, recommended to them by the same Authority. And as to the matters themselves which will, then remain to be disputed; we have first the distinguishing name, and if we run over all those before recited, is it a matter of that consequence, as to cut throats, and lay Towns and Countries desolate, only upon this quarrel, which of these hath the handsomer sound? The different Rites of this or that way, to them who have no respect to the Authority injoyning them must, in themselves signifie as little.

And

And for the peculiar opinions of one or another Sect, it may be soberly said, a very great part understand no more of the distinguishing Principles of their own, than he that was yet to learn how many legs a Sectary had. Only they have learn'd to pronounce the word which is the Shibboleth of their party to follow the common, cry and run with the rest, that have agreed to do so too!

But if they all understood the notions never so well, (not to speak of only those which are peculiar to their way, but) which are most necessary to true Religion it self; were it not, in them, a strange Phrensie, to contend with Clubs and Swords about a meer notion, which hath no influence on their practice, and they intend never shall? If any should profess to be of opinion that a Triangle is a figure that hath

hath four corners, sober men would think it enough to say they were mad, but would let them quietly enjoy their humour, and never think it fit to levy Armies against them, or embroil the world upon so slender a quarrel. And wherein can the notions belonging to Religion be rationally, of higher account, with them, who never purpose to make any use of them? And against which it is impossible for any to fight so mischievously by the most vehement, verbal opposition, as themselves do, by their opposite practice, most directly assaulting, and striking at, even what is most principally fundamental to Religion and the Temple of God? Not that these great things are unworthy to be contended for. (All that I mean is, what have these men to do with them? or how irrationally and inconsistently with them-

themselves do they seem so concern'd about them? )

For even lesser things, the appendages to this sacred frame, are not without their just value, to them who understand their intent, and use. Nor am I designing to tempt your Lordship to the neglect or disesteem of any the least thing appertaining to Religion. And if any other should, I rejoyce daily to behold in you, that resolute adherence to whatsoever apparently Divine Truth, and Institution, to common order, decency, peace and unity) which so greatly contribute both to the beauty and stability of Gods house) that may even desie and dismay the attempt ; and gives ground, however, to be confident it would be labour bestow'd as vainly, as it were impiously designed. So much greater assurance do you give, of your constant fidelity and devotedness,

tedness, to the substance of practical Religion it self.

Only how deeply is it to be represented, that while it should be so with all others, so few understand wherein that substance doth consist. I shall not now take notice of mens very different (which must infer some mens mistaken) apprehensions concerning the things necessary to be believed. But, besides that, though some religious sentiments be most deeply natural to men (and for ought we certainly know, as far extended as the true notion of humanity can be) yet in all times, there hath been a too general mistake, (not peculiar to the Paganish world only) of the true design, and proportionably of the genuine principle of it.

That is, it hath not been understood as a thing designed to purifie and refine mens spirits, to reconcile



cile and joyn them to God, associate them with him, and make them finally blessed in him. But only to avert or pacifie his wrath, procure his favourable aspect on their secular affairs (how unjust soever) while, in the mean time, they have thought of nothing less, than becoming like to him, acquainted with him, and happy in him. A reconciliation hath only been dreamt of on one side, viz. on his, not their own; on which, they are not so much as inclined to any thing else, than the continuance of the former distance, and disaffection.

Consonantly whereto, it is plainly to be seen, the great principle which hath mostly animated Religion in the world hath not been a generous love, but a basely servile fear, and dread. Whence the custom of sacrificing hath so generally

rally prevailed (whencesoever it took its rise) in the Pagan world. And with so deep an apprehension of its absolute necessity, that men of even so vile and barbarous manners \* as the Gauls of old chose in matters of Controversie to permit their greatest concerns to the pleasure and arbitrement of their Druides (those sacred persons as they reckon'd them) rather than be interdicted the Sacrifices (the only punishment they could inflict) in case of their refusal, which punishment (as is testified by Julius Cæsar \*) they accounted the most grievous imaginable. And it needs not be said in what part of the world, the same engine hath had the same power with men. Even since they obtained to be called Christian. Which, while it hath been of such force with them, that notwithstanding, persisted in courses

\* See the character given of them by Cicero Orat pro Marc. Fon.

\* Comment. lib. 6.

*courses of the most profligate wickedness: whence could their Religion (such as it was) proceed, save only from a dread of Divine Revenge? what else could it design (though that most vainly) but the averting it, without ever altering their own vile course.*

*Now let this be the account and estimate of Religion, only to propitiate the Deity towards flagitious men, still remaining so; and how monstrous a notion doth it give us of God! that he is one that by such things can ever be rendred favourable to such men! Let it not be so (while you sever its true and proper end also.) How most despicably inept and foolish a thing doth it make Religion? A compages and frame of merely scenical observances and actions, intended to no end at all.*

In a word, Their Religion is nothing but foolery, which is not taken up and prosecuted with a sincere aim to the bettering their Spirits: the making them holy, peaceful, meek, humble, merciful, studious of doing good, and the composing them into Temples, some way, meet for the residence of the blessed God; with design and expectation to have his intimate vital presence, settled and made permanent there.

The materials and preparation of which Temple are no where entirely contained and directed, but in the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. (As hereafter we may with Divine Assistance labour to evince.) The greater is the ignominy done to the Temple of God, and the Christian name, by only titular and nicknamed Christianity. Will they pretend themselves the Temple of God,  
partakers

partakers in the high privilege and dignity of the Emmanuel, (in whom most eminently the Deity inhabiteth) who are discernably to all that know them, as great strangers to God, and of a temper of spirit as disagreeing to him, of as worldly spirits, as unmortified passions, as proud, wrathful, vain-glorious, envious, morose, merciless, disinclined to do good, as any other men? When God cleanses his house, and purges his floor, where will these be found?

And for this Temple it self, it is a structure whereto there is a concurrence of Truth and Holiness. The former letting in (twere otherwise a darksome, disorderly, uncomfortable house) a vital, directive, formative light, to an heavenly, calm, God-like frame of Spirit, composed and made up of the latter. I



It is this Temple, my Lord, which I would invite you both to continue your respect unto in others, and, more and more, to prepare, and beautifie in your self.

You will find little, in this part, offered to your view, more than only its vestibulum, or rather a very plain (if not rude) Frontispice; with the more principal Pillars that must support the whole frame. Nor, whereas (by way of introduction to the discourse of this Temple, and as most fundamental to the Being of it) the Existence of the great Inhabitant is so largely insisted on, that I think that altogether a needless labour. Of all the Sects and Parties in the world, (though there are few that avow it, and fewer, if any, that are so, by any formed judgment, unshaken by a suspicion and dread  
of

of the contrary) that of Atheists we have reason enough to suppose the most numerous, as having diffused and spread it self through all the rest. And though, with the most, under disguise; yet uncovering with too many, its ugly face. And scarce ever more than in our own days. Wherefore, though it hath never been, in any age, more strongly impugned; yet, because the opposition can never be too common, to so common an enemy, this additional endeavour may prove not wholly out of season. And the Epicurean Atheist is chiefly designed against in this Discourse; that being the Atheism most in fashion.

Nor is any thing more pertinent to the design of the discourse intended concerning God's Temple; which importing worship

*to be done to him, requires first a belief that he is.*

*And surely the [ET] inscribed of old, as Plutarch tells us, on the Delphick Temple; signifying (as, after divers other conjectures, he concludes it to do) Thou dost exist, is an inscription, much more fitly set in view, at our entrance into the Temple of the Living God, whose name is I A M.*

*Amidst the pleasant entertainments of which Temple (made more intimate to you than humane discourse can make it) may you spend many happy days in this world, as a preparative, and introduction to an happier eternity in the other. Whereto he is under many and deep obligations, by any means, to contribute to his uttermost, who must*  
(especially

( xxxv )

*(especially in the offices relating to  
this Temple) profess himself,*

My Honoured Lord,

Your Lordship's most humbly

Devoted Servant,

*John Howe.*

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E R-

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## ERRATA.

PAG. 3. line 30. read *banish*. p. 8. l. 18. r. *altar*. p. 11. l. 32: r. *ex-  
cites*. p. 24. marg. l. 22. r. *Menecemus*. p. 27. l. 19. r. *invocation*.  
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*Adpiri*. p. 344. l. 13. for *think* r. *things*. p. 351. l. 6. r. *above-  
mention'd*.

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THE



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THE  
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OF THE  
FIRST PART.

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CHAP.

## CHAP. III.

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*chines. 1. How improbable it is. 2. How little to the purpose. The powers of the humane soul. It appears, notwithstanding them, it had a Cause; By them, a wise and intelligent Cause. It is not matter. That not capable of Reason. They not here reflected on who think reasonable souls made of refined matter, by the Creator. Not being matter, nor arising from thence it must have a Cause that is intelligent. Goodness also belonging to this Being.* P. 57

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*If not, more rare things of this sort, not wanting.*

*2 Demand. Can Subjects, remote from their Prince, sufficiently be assured of his existence?*

*3 Demand. Can we be sure there are men on earth?*

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C H A P. I.

*Wherein is shewn the Destructiveness of Spinoza's Scheme and Design to Religion, and the Temple of God. The Repugnancy of his Doctrine to this Assertion [that whatsoever exists necessarily, and of it self, is absolutely perfect] which is therefore further weighed. His vain Attempt to prove what he designs. His 2d. Proposition considered. His Definition of a Substance Defective. Proves not his Purpose. His 3d, 4th, and 5th, Proposition. His 8th. Scholia. The Manuductio ad Pantosophiam. Pag. I*

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## CHAP. X.

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CHAP. XI.

*The Sixth Head, proposed before, now insisted on. That for the purpose of inhabiting this Temple, already formed, the Spirit is given by the EMMANUEL, as a Trustee. The Oeconomus, or Chief Steward of God's Household. And by a certain, known Rule. Giving them that are to partake therein, the Ground of a Rightful Claim unto this great and most comprehensive Gift. Whereupon to be considered,*

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Amplitude, or  
Comprehensiveness } thereof. p. 405

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THE  
LIVING TEMPLE,

Or the Notion Improved, that a

*Good Man is the Temple of God.*

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PART I.

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CHAP. I.

*This Notion common. Authorities needless. Insignificant with the Atheistical. Who have made it more necessary to defend Religion, and a Temple in general, than this, or that. Better defended against them by Practice and Use, than Argument. Whereof they are incapable. Often Disputes of its Principles not necessary to the Practice of Religion. Some consideration of those supposed in the general Notion of a Temple, pertinent (however) to this Discourse.*

I. **I**T is so well known that *this Notion* hath long obtain'd in the world, that we need not quote Sayings to avouch it; wherewith not the sacred Writings only, but others, even of Pagans themselves, would plentifully furnish us.

But as Authorities are, in a plain case, needless to unprejudic'd minds; so will they be useless to the prejudic'd, be the case never so plain. Nor is any prejudice deeper, or less vincible, than that of profane minds against Religion. With such, it would, in the present Argument, signifie little, to tell them what hath been said or thought before by any others. Not because it is their general course to be so very circumspect and wary, as never to approve or assent to any thing, unless upon the clearest and most convincing demonstration: but from their peculiar dislike of those things only, that are of this special import and tendency. Discourse to them what you will of a *Temple*, and it will be nauseous and unfavoury: not as being cross to their *reason* (which they are as little curious to gratifie as any other sort of men) but to their *ill humour*, and the disaffected temper of  
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their mind; whence also (though they cannot soon or easily get that mastery over their understandings herein, yet because they would fain have it so) they do what they can to believe *Religion* nothing else but the effect of timorous fancy, and a *Temple*, consequently, one of the most idle impertinencies in the world.

To these, the discussion of the notion we have proposed to consider, will be thought a beating the air, an endeavour to give consistency to a shadow: And if their reason and power could as well serve their purpose as their anger and scorn, they would soon tear up the holy ground on which a *Temple* is set, and wholly subvert the Sacred Frame.

I speak of such as deny the *existence of the ever blessed Deity*; or (if they are not arrived to that express, and formed misbelief) *whose hearts are enclined*, and ready to determine, even against their mis-giving and more suspicious minds, *there is no God*. Who, if they cannot as yet *believe*, do *wish* there were none: and so strongly; as in a great degree to prepare them for that belief. That would fain banish him not only out of all their thoughts, but the

world too. And to whom it is so far from being a gratefull sound, That *the Tabernacle of God is with men on earth*, that they grudge to allow him a place *in heaven*. At least, if they are willing to admit the existence of any God at all, do say to him, *Depart from us*; and would have him so confined to heaven, that he, and they may have nothing to do with one another. And do therefore rack their impious wits to serve *their hypothesis* either way; that under its protection they may securely indulge themselves in a course, upon which they find the apprehension of a God, interesting himself in humane affairs, would have a very unfavourable, and threatening aspect.

They are therefore constrained to take great pains with themselves, to discipline and chastise their minds and understandings, to that tameness, and patience, as contentedly to suffer the razing out of their most *natural impressions*, and sentiments. And they reckon they have arrived to a very Heroical perfection, when they can pass a scoff upon any thing, that carries the least signification with it, of *the fear of God*; and can be able to laugh at the weak, and squeamish folly of those softer, and effeminate minds,



minds, that will trouble themselves with any thoughts or cares, how to please, and propitiate a *Deity*: And doubt not but they have made all safe, and effectually done their business, when they have learned to put the ignominious titles of frenzy, and folly, upon *devotion*, in whatsoever dress, or garb; to cry *canting*, to any serious mention of the name of God, and break a bold, adventurous jest, upon any the most *sacred Mysteries*, or *decent*, and awful *solemnities* of Religion.

II. These content not themselves to encounter this or that *Sect*, but *Mankind*; and reckon it too mean, and inglorious an atchievement, to overturn one *sort of Temple*, or *another*; but would *down with them all, even to the ground*.

And they are in *reason*, and *justice* to pardon the emulation which they provoke, of vying with them as to the *universality of their design*; and not regret it, if they find there be any, that think it their duty, to wave a while serving the *Temple of this or that party*, as less considerable, to defend that *one* wherein all men have a common interest, and concernment.

Since matters are brought to that exigency and hazard, that it seems less necessary to contend about *this* or *that* mode of Religion, as whether there ought to be *any at all*; What was said of a former age, could never better agree to any, than our own, *that none was ever more fruitful of Religions, and barren of Religion, or true Piety*. It concerns us to consider, whether the fertility of *those many*, doth not as well cause, as accompany, a barrenness in *this one*. And (since the iniquity of the world hath made that too suitable, which were otherwise unseemly in it self, to speak of a Temple as a fortified place, whose own sacredness ought, ever, to have been its sufficient fortification) it is time to be aware, lest our forgetful heat, and zeal, in the defence of this or that *out-work*, do expose (not to say betray) the *main fortress* to assault and danger. Whilst it hath long been by this means, a neglected, forsaken thing; and is more decayed by vacancy, and disuse, than it could ever have been, by the most forcible battery; so as even to promise the rude assailant, an easie victory. Who fears to insult over an empty, dispirited, dead Religion! which, alive, and shining in its native glory (as that Temple

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Temple doth, which is compacted of lively stones united to the living corner stone) bears with it a magnificence, and state, that would check a profane look, and dazle the presumptuous eye, that durst venture to glance at it obliquely, or with disrespect. The Temple of the living God, manifestly animated by his vital presence, would not only dismay opposition, but command Veneration also: and be its own both Ornament, and defence. Nor can it be destitute of that Presence, if we our selves render it not inhospitable, and make not its proper inhabitant, become a stranger at home. If we preserve in our selves a capacity of the Divine Presence, and keep the Temple of God in a posture fit to receive him; he would then no more forsake it, than the soul, a sound, and healthy body, not violated in any vital part: But if he forsake it once, it then becomes an exposed, and despised thing. And as the most impotent, inconsiderable enemy can securely trample on the dead body of the greatest Heroe, that alive carried awfulness, and terror in his looks: so is the weak spirited Atheist become as bold, now, as he was willing, before, to make rude attempts upon the Temple of God, when *He* hath  
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been provoked to leave it, who is its life, strength, and glory.

III. Therefore as they who will not be treacherous to the interest of *God*, and *man*, must own an obligation and necessity to apply themselves to the serious endeavour of restoring the life, and honour of Religion; So will the *case it self*, be found to point out to us the *proper course*, in order hereto. That is, that it must rather be endeavoured by *practice*, than by *disputation*. By contending, every one, *with himself*, to excite the *love of God*, in his own breast; rather than with the *profane adversary* to kindle *his anger*, more aiming to ferment and cherish the domestick, continual fire of *God's Temple*, and *Alter*, than transmit a flame into the enemies Camp. For what can this signifie? and it seldom fails to be the event of disputing against prejudice (especially of disputing for the sum of Religion at once against the pre-possession of a sensual prophane temper, and a violent inclination and resolvedness to be wicked) to beget more *wrath*, than *conviction*, and sooner to *incense* the impatient wretch, than *enlighten* him. And by how much the more cogent and enforcing reasonings

ings are used, and the less is left the confounded, baffled, creature to say, on behalf of a cause so equally deplorable, and vile: The more he finds himself concern'd to fortifie his *obstinate will*, and supply his want of *reason*, with *resolution*. To find out the most expedite ways of diverting, from what he hath no mind to consider. To entertain himself with the most stupifying pleasures (that must serve the same turn that *opium* is wont to do in the case of broken, unquiet sleep) or whatsoever may most effectually serve to mortifie any Divine Principle, and destroy all sense of God out of his Soul.

And how grateful herein, and meritorious often, are the assistant railleries of servile (and it may be mercenary) wits? How highly shall he oblige them, that can furnish out a Libel against Religion, and help them, with more artificial spight, to blaspheme what they cannot disprove. And now shall the scurrilous Pasquil, and a few Bottles, work a more effectual confutation of Religion, than all the reason and argument in the world shall be able to counter-vail. This proves too often the unhappy issue of mis-applying, what is most excellent in its own kind, and  
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place, to improper, and incapable Subjects.

IV. And who sees not this to be the case with the *modern Atheist*, who hath been pursu'd with that strength, and vigour of argument, even in our own days, that would have baffled persons, of any other temper than their own, into shame and silence? And so as no other support hath been left to Irreligion, than a senseless stupidity, an obstinate resolvedness not to consider, a faculty to stifle an argument with a jest, to charm their reason by sensual softnesses into a dead sleep; with a strict and circumspect care that it may never awake into any exercise above the condition of dozd and half witted persons; or if it do, by the next debauch, presently to lay it fast again. So that the *very Principle* fails in this sort of men, whereto, in reasoning, we should appeal, and apply ourselves. And it were almost the same thing to offer arguments to the senseless images, or forsaken carcases of men. It belongs to the *Grandeur of Religion*, to neglect the impotent assaults of these men: as it is a piece of glory, and bespeaks a worthy persons right understanding, and just value of himself, to dis-

disdain the combat, with an incompetent, or a foiled enemy. It is becoming, and seemly that the grand, ancient, and received Truth, which tends to, and is the reason of the *godly life*, do sometimes keep state: and no more descend to perpetual, repeated janglings with every scurrilous, and impertinent trifler, than a great and redoubted Prince, would think it fit to dispute the Rights of his Crown, with a drunken, distracted Fool, or a Mad-man.

Men of Atheistical Perswasions having abandon'd their reason, need what will more powerfully strike their sense: Storms and Whirlwinds, Flames and Thunderbolts; things not so apt immediately to work upon their *understanding*, as their *fear*, and that will *astonish* that they may *convince*; That the great God make himself *known by the Judgments which he executes*. *Stripes are for the back of fools* (as they are justly stiled that say in *their hearts There is no God*;) But if it may be hoped any gentler method may prove effectual with any of them, we are rather to expect the good effect from the *steady, uniform* course of their *Actions*, and Conversation, who profess reverence, and devotedness to an *eternal Being*; And the

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correspondence of *their way*, to their avow'd *Principle*, that acts them on agreeably to it self, and may also incur *the sense*, of the beholder, and gradually invite and draw his observation; than from the most severe, and necessitating argumentation, that exacts a suddain assent.

V. At least in a matter of so clear and commanding evidence, reasoning many times looks like trifling; and out of an hearty concernedness, and jealousy, for the honour of Religion, one would rather it should march on, with an Heroical neglect of bold and malapert cavillers: and only demonstrate and recommend it self, by its own vigorous, comely, coherent course, than make it self cheap, by discussing, at every turn, its Principles. As that *Philosopher* who thought it the fittest way to confute the sophisms against motion, only *by walking*.

But we have nothing so considerable objected against *practical Religion* as well to deserve the name of a *Sophism*: (at least no *sophism* so perplexing in the case of *Religious* as of *natural motion*) Jeers, and Sarcasms, are the most weighty convincing arguments. And let the deplorable

deplorate crew mock on: There are those in the world, that will think they have, however, reason enough to persist in the way of godliness: and that have already laid the foundation of that reverence which they bear to a Deity, more strongly, than to be shaken, and beaten off from it by a jest.

And therefore will not think it necessary to have the Principles of their Religion vindicated afresh, every time they are called to the practice of it. For surely they would be religious upon very uncertain terms, that will think themselves concern'd to suspend, or discontinue their course, as oft as they are encountred in it, with a wry mouth, or a distorted look; or that are apt to be put out of conceit with their Religion, by the *laughter of a fool*: Or by their cavils and taunts against the Rules and Principles of it, whom only their own sensual temper, and impatience of serious thoughts, have made willing to have them false. That any indeed should commence Religious, and persist with blind Zeal in *this* or *that* discriminating Profession, without ever considering, why they should do so; is unmanly, and absurd: especially when a gross ignorance of the true reasons and grounds  
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of Religion shall be shadowed over with a pretended awe, and scrupulousness to enquire about things *so sacred*. And an inquisitive temper shall have an *ill character* put upon it, as if *rational*, and *profane* were words of the same signification. Or as if reason, and judgment were utterly execrated, and an unaccountable, enthusiastick fury, baptiz'd, and halloved, the *only Principle of Religion*. But when the matter hath undergone, already, a severe inquisition, and been searcht to the bottom; principles have been examined, the strength and firmness hath been tried, of its deepest and most fundamental grounds, and an approving judgment been past in the case, and a resolution thereupon taken up, of a suitable, and correspondent practice. After all this, it were a vain and unwarrantable curiosity, to be perpetually perplexing ones easie path, with new and suspicious researches into the most acknowledg'd things. Nor were this course a little prejudicial to *the design and end of Religion* (if we will allow it any at all) the *refining of our minds*, and the *fitting us for an happy eternity*: For when shall that building be finish'd, the foundations whereof must be every day torn up anew, upon pretence



tence of further caution, and for more diligent search? Or when will he reach his journeys end, that is continually vex'd (and often occasion'd to go back from whence he came) by causeless anxieties about his way; and whether ever he began a right course yea or no?

Many go securely on in a course most ignominiously wicked and vile, without ever debating the matter with themselves, or enquiring if there be any rational principle, to justify or bear them out. Much more may they, with a cheerful confidence, persist in their well-chosen way, that have once settled their resolutions about it, upon firm and assured grounds and principles, without running over the same course of reasonings with themselves, in reference to each single, devotional act; or thinking it necessary every time they are to pray, to have it prov'd to them, *there is a God.*

And because yet, many of these do need excitation, and though they are not destitute of pious sentiments and inclinations. and have somewhat in them, of the ancient foundations and frame of a Temple, have yet by neglect suffered it to grow into decay: It is there-

therefore the *principal intendment* of *this discourse*, not to assert the Principles of Religion, against those with whom they have no place, but to propound what may some way tend to reinforce and strengthen them, where they visibly languish; and awaken such as profess a devotedness to God, to the speedy, and vigorous endeavour, of repairing the ruins of his Temple, in their own Breasts. That they may thence hold forth a visible representation of an in-dwelling Deity, in effects and actions of life worthy of such a Presence, and render his enshrined glory, transparent to the view, and conviction of the irreligious and profane. Which hath more of hope in it, and is likely to be to better purpose, than disputing with them that more know how to jest, than reason; and better understand the relishes of *meat and drink*, than the strength of an *argument*.

VI. But though it would be both an ungrateful and insignificant labour, and as talking to the wind, to discourse of Religion, with persons that have abjur'd all seriousness, and that cannot endure *to think*: And would be like fighting with a storm, to contend against

gainst the blasphemy and outrage of insolent mockers at whatever is Sacred and Divine; and were too much a debasing of Religion to retort Sarcasms, with men not capable of being talkt with in any other than such (that is, their own) language. Yet it wants neither its use nor pleasure, to the most composed minds, and that are most exempt from wavering herein, to view the frame of their Religion, as it aptly, and even naturally, rises and grows up from its very foundations. To contemplate its first Principles, which they may in the mean time find no present cause or inclination to dispute. They will know how to consider its most fundamental grounds, not with doubt or suspicion, but with admiration and delight; and can with a calm and silent pleasure, enjoy the repose and rest of a quiet and well-assured mind. Rejoycing and contented to know to themselves (when others refuse to partake with them in this joy) and feel all firm and stable under them, whereupon either the practice, or the hopes, of their Religion do depend.

And there may be also many others of good and pious inclinations, that have never yet apply'd themselves to consider

der the principal, and most fundamental grounds of Religion, so as to be able to give, or discern, any tolerable reason of them. For either the sluggishness of their own temper may have indisposed them to any more painful, and laborious exercise of their minds, and made them to be content with the easier course of taking every thing upon trust, and imitating the example of others; or they have been unhappily mis-informed that it consists not with the reverence due to Religion, to search into the grounds of it. Yea and may have laid this for one of its main grounds that no exercise of Reason may have any place about it. Or perhaps having never try'd, they apprehend a greater difficulty in coming to a clear and certain resolution herein, than indeed there is. Now such need to be excited to set their own thoughts a work this way, and to be assisted herein. They should therefore consider who gave them the understandings which they fear to use? And can they use them to better purpose, or with more gratitude to him who made them intelligent, and not brute Creatures, than in labouring to know, that they may also by a reasonable service, worship and adore  
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their Maker? Are they not to use their very *senses* about the matters of Religion? For the *invisible things of God, even his eternal power and Godhead are clearly seen*, &c. And their Faith comes by *hearing*. But what? are *these* more Sacred and Divine, and more akin to Religion, than their *Reason* and *Judgment*? Without which also their sense can be of no use to them herein? Or is it the best way of making use of what God hath revealed of himself, by whatsoever means, not to understand what he hath revealed? It is most true indeed, that when we once come clearly to be informed that God hath revealed this, or that, thing, we are then readily to subject (and not oppose) our feeble reasonings to his plain revelation. And it were a most insolent and uncreaturely arrogance, to contend or not yield him the cause, though things have to us seemed otherwise. But it were as inexcusable negligence, not to make use of our understandings to the best advantage; that we may both know that such a Revelation is Divine, and *what it signifies*, after we know *whence it is*. And any one that considers, will soon see it were very unseasonable, at least, to alledge the written Divine Revelation, as the



ground of his Religion, till he have gone lower, and fore-known some things (by and by to be insisted on) as preparatory and fundamental to the knowledge of this.

And because it is obvious to suppose how great an increase of strength and vigour, pious minds may receive hence, how much it may animate them to the service of the Temple, and contribute to their more chearful progress in a religious course: It will therefore not be besides our present purpose, but very pursuant to it, to consider awhile, not in the contentious way of brawling and captious disputation (the noise whereof is as unsuitable to the Temple as that of axes and hammers) but of calm and sober discourse; the more principal and lowermost grounds upon which the frame of Religion rests, and to the supposal whereof the *notion*, and *use*, of any such thing as a *Temple* in the world; do owe themselves.

## CHAP. II.

The two more principal grounds which a Temple supposes. 1. The existence of God. 2. His Conversableness with men: Both argued from common consent. The former doubtful if ever wholly deny'd in former days. The latter also implied in the known general practice of some or other Religion. Evidenc'd, in that some, no strangers to the world, have thought it the difference of man. The immodesty and rashness of the persons from whom any opposition can be expected. These two grounds proposed to be more strictly considered apart. And first the existence of God. Where first the notion of God is assigned. The parts whereof are proposed to be evinc'd severally of some existent Being. 1. Eternity. 2. Self-origination. 3. Independency. 4. Necessity of existence. 5. Self-activity. The impossibility this world should be this necessary self-active Being. The inconsistency of necessary alterable matter, more largely deduced in a marginal digression. 6. Life. 7. Vast and mighty power. A Corollary.

I. **N**OW the grounds more necessary to be laid down, and which are supposed in the most general notion of a Temple, are especially these two;

{ The existence of God, and  
 { His conversableness with men,

For no notion of a Temple can more easily occur to any ones thoughts, or is more agreeable to common acceptation; than that it is *an habitation wherein God is pleased to dwell among men.*

Therefore to the designation and use of it, or (which is all one) to the intention and exercise of Religion, the belief or perswasion is necessary of those two things (the same which we find made necessary on the same account)  
 Heb. 11. 6. *That God is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him;* as will appear when the *manner, and design* of that his *abode with men*, shall be considered.

These are the grounds upon which the sacred Frame of a Temple ought to stand, and without which it must be acknowledged an unsupported, airy fabrick. And since it were vain to discourse what a Temple is, or whereto the notion of it may be applied; unless it be well resolved

solved that there is, or ought to be *any such thing*. The strength and firmness of this its double ground should be tried and search'd, and of its pretensions thereto.

II. And though it be not necessary in a matter that is so plain, and wherein so much is to be said otherwise; yet it will not be impertinent to consider, First, what Prescription (which in clearing of titles is not wont to signify nothing) will signify in the present case. And,

First, For the existence of God, we need not labour much to shew how constantly and generally it hath been acknowledg'd through the whole world; it being so difficult to produce an uncontroverted, instance, of any that ever deny'd it, in more ancient times. For as for them whose names have been infamous amongst men heretofore upon that account, there hath been that said that, at least, wants not probability for the clearing them of so foul an imputation: That is, that they were maliciously represented as having deny'd the existence of a Deity, because they impugned and derided the vulgar conceits, and poetical fictions of those days con-

*Parker  
Tent. am.*

*De natura  
Deorum,  
lib. I.*

*Protag.  
Abderites.*

cerning the multitude, and the ridiculous attributes of their imaginary Deities. Of which sort *Cicero* mentions not a few; Their being inflam'd with Anger, and mad with Lust, their Wars, Fights, Wounds, their Hatreds, Discords, their Births and Deaths, &c. Who though he speak less favourably of some of these men, and mentions one as doubting whether there were any Gods or no; (for which cause his Book in the beginning whereof he had intimated that doubt, (as *Cotta* is brought in, informing us) was publicly burnt at *Athens*, and himself banisht his

\* *Diagoras* and *Theodorus Cyrenaicus* (who as *Diogenes Laertius* in *Aristip.* reports) was surnamed *ἄθεός*, afterwards *ἄθεός*. † *Epicurus*, whom also his own Epistle to *Menaagius* in *Diogenes Laertius* acquits of Atheism, but not of Irreligion; as hereafter may be observed.

Country) and two others\* as expressly denying them; yet the more generally decried † *Patron* of Atheism (as he hath been accounted) he makes *Velleius* highly vindicate from this imputation, and say of

him that he was the first that took notice that even nature it self had impressed the notion of God upon the minds of all men: who also gives us these as his words, "What Nation  
"is there or sort of men that hath not  
"without teaching, a certain anticipation



“pation of the Gods, which he calls  
“a prolepsis, a certain preventive, or  
“fore-conceived information of a thing  
“in the mind, without which nothing  
“can be understood, or sought, or dis-  
“puted of. Unto which purpose the  
same Author (as is commonly obser-  
ved) elsewhere speaks; That there is  
no Nation so barbarous, no one of all *Cicero*  
men so savage, as that some apprehen- *Tuscul.*  
sion of the Gods hath not tintured *Quæst. l. 1.*  
his mind. That many do think indeed  
corruptly of them, which is (saith he)  
the effect of vicious custom. But all do  
believe there is a Divine Power, and  
Nature. Nor (as he there proceeds)  
hath mens talking, and agreeing toge-  
ther, effected this. It is not an opinion  
setled in mens minds by publick consti-  
tutions, and sanctions, but in every matter  
the consent of all Nations, is to be  
reckoned a law of Nature.

And whatever the apprehensions of  
those few (and some others that are  
wont to be mention'd under the same  
vile character were in this matter, yet  
so inconsiderable hath the dissent been;  
that, as another most ingenious Pagan *Maxim.*  
Author writes, “In so great a contenti- *Tyr. diff.*  
“on and variety of opinions (that is  
“concerning what God is) herein you  
“shall

"shall see the law and reason of every

"Country to be harmonious and one.

ὁ μὲν φωνὴν  
νόμον καὶ  
λόγον.

"That there is one God the King and

"Father of all--That the many are but

"the servants and *co-rulers* unto God.

συνάρχον.  
τὸς διέφ.

"That herein the Greek and the Barba-

"rian says the same thing, The Islander

"and the Inhabitant of the Conti-

"nent, The Wise and the Foolish: Go to

"the utmost bounds of the Ocean, and

"you find God there. But if (says

αὐτὸν καὶ  
ταπεινὸν,  
καὶ ἀναίδεος  
ζῆλος,

"he) in all time, there have been two

"or three, an atheistical, vile, senseless

"sort of persons, whose own eyes and

"ears deceive them, and who are maim-

"ed in their very soul, an irrational and

"sterile sort, as monstrous creatures, as

"a Lion without courage, an Ox with-

"out horns, or a bird without wings.

"Yet, out of those, you shall under-

"stand somewhat of God. For they

"know and confess him whether *they*

"*will or no.*

III. Yea, and the use of a Temple, and the exercise of Religion (which suppose the second ground also as well as the first) have been so very common (though not altogether equally common with the former,) that it is the observation of that famed moralist, "That  
"if

“ if one travel the world, 'tis possible to  
 “ find Cities without Walls, without  
 “ Letters, without Kings, without  
 “ Wealth, without Coin, without Schools  
 “ and Theatres. But a City without a  
 “ Temple, or that useth no Worship,  
 “ Prayers, &c. no one ever saw. And  
 “ he believes a City may more easily be  
 “ built without a foundation (or ground  
 “ \* to set it on) than any community of  
 “ men have or keep a consistency *without*  
 “ Religion.

*Plutarch.  
adversus  
Colotem.*

*\* ἐξ ὧν  
καὶ οὐκ*

IV. And it is no mean argument of  
 the commonness of Religion, that there  
 have been some in the world (and those  
 no Idiots neither) that have accounted  
 it the most constituent, and distinguish-  
 ing thing in humane nature. So that  
 Platonick Jew, judgeth in vocation “ of  
 “ God with hope towards him to be,  
 “ if we will speak the truth, the only  
 “ genuine property of Man, and saith  
 “ that only he who is acted *by such an*  
 “ hope, is a man, and he that is destitute  
 “ of this hope, is *no man*, preferring  
 this account to the common definition  
 (which he says is only of the concrete  
 of man) that he is a reasonable, and  
 mortal living creature. And yet he ex-  
 tends not reason further, that is, to the  
 inferi-

*Philo. libr.  
de eo quod  
Deterius  
potiori in-  
sid.*

*ὡν ἐστὶν  
ἐλπίς, ἀν-  
θρώπου  
ὁ δὲ ἀνθρώπος  
καὶ ἀνθρώπου  
πῶς*

inferior creatures, for he had expressly said above "That they who have no  
"hope towards God, have no part or  
"share in the rational nature.

*Herbert de  
verit.*

And a noble person of our own says,  
"That upon accurate search, *Religion*  
"and *Faith* appear the only ultimate  
"differences of man; whereof neither  
"Divine perfection, is capable, not *brutal*  
"imperfection. Reason in his account  
descending low among the inferiour  
creatures. But *these* agreeing more pe-  
culiarly to man, and so universally,  
that he affirms, "There is no man well,  
"and entirely in his wits, that doth not  
"worship some Deity.

Who therefore accounted it a less ab-  
surdity to admit such a thing as a *rational*  
*Beast*, than an *irreligious man*. Now  
if these have taken notice of any in-  
stances that seem'd to claim an exempti-  
on from this notion of *Man*; they have  
rather thought fit to let them pass as an  
anomalous sort of creatures, reducible to  
no certain rank or order in the Creation;  
than that any should be admitted into  
the account, or be acknowledged of the  
Society of *Men*, that were found de-  
stitute of an inclination to worship the  
common Author of our beings. And  
according to this opinion; By what-  
soever

soever steps any should advance in the denial of a Deity; they should proceed by the same, to the abandoning their own humanity; and by saying there is *no God*, should proclaim themselves *no men*.

However it discovers (which is all that is at present intended by it) the commonness, not to say absolute universality, of Religion, in the observation of these Persons, whom we must suppose no strangers to the world, in their own, and former, times. And if it afford any less ground for such an observation in our present time, we only see as the world grows older it grows worse, and sinks into a deeper oblivion of its original, as it recedes further from it.

And (notwithstanding) this so common a consent is yet not without its weight and significancy to our present purpose. If we consider

How impossible it is to give or imagine any tolerable account of its original, if we do not confess it natural, and refer it to that common Author of all nature whom we are enquiring about: (of which so much is said by \* divers others, that nothing more needs here to be said about it.

\* See *Cicero* in sundry places. *Grotius de veritate Christianæ Relig.* *Du Pleff.* same subject and title. *Calvin. Instit.* *Episcopus* his *Instit.* *Theol.* who hath written nervously on this subject, with many more. *But especially Dr. Stillingfleet* in his *Orig. Sacr*

V. And



V. And at least so much is gained by it to a Temple, that unless some very plain and ungainfayable demonstration be brought against the grounds of it (which will be time enough to consider when we see it pretended to) no opposition, fit to be regarded, can ever be made to it. That is, none at all can possibly be made; but what shall proceed from the most immodest and rash confidence, animated and born up only by a design of being most licentious, wicked, and of making the world become so. Immodest confidence it must be, for it is not a Man, or a Nation, or an Age that such have to oppose, but Mankind; upon which they shall cast, not some lighter reflection, but the vilest and most opprobrious contumely, and scorn, that can be imagined. That is, the imputation of so egregious folly and dotage, as all this while to have worshipped a *shadow*, as the *Author of their Being*; and a *figment*, for their *common parent*. And this not the ruder only, and uninquisitive vulgar, but the wisest and most considering persons in all times. Surely less than clear and pregnant demonstration (at least not wild incoherent self-confounding suppositions

positions and surmises, of which more hereafter) will ever be thought sufficient to justify the boldness of an attempt that shall carry this signification with it. And it will be a confidence equally *rash*, as *immodest*. For what can be the undertakers hope, either of success or reward? Do they think it an easie enterprize? and that a few quirks of malapert wit will serve the turn to baffle the Deity into nothing? and unteach the world Religion? and raze out impressions renew'd and transmitted thro' so many ages? and perswade the race of men to descend a peg lower, and believe they ought to live, and shall die, like the perishing beast. Or do they expect to find men indifferent in a matter that concerns their common Practice and Hope? and wherein their zeal hath been wont to be such as that it hath obtained to be proverbial, *to strive as for the very Altars*. And what should their reward be, when the natural tendency of their undertaking is to *exclude* themselves from the expectation of any in *another* world? And what will they expect *in this*, from them whose Temples and Altars they go about to subvert? Besides, that if they be not hurried by a blind impetuous rashness, they  
would

would consider their danger, and apprehend themselves concern'd to strike very sure: For if there remain but the least possibility that the matter is otherwise, and that *the being* doth exist, whose honour and worship they contend against, they must understand his favour to be of some concernment to them; which they take but an ill course to entitle themselves unto. Much more have they reason to be solicitous, when their horrid cause, not only wants evidence; nor hath hitherto pretended to more than a bare possibility of truth on their side; but hath so clear (and as yet altogether unrefuted) evidence lying against it; that quite takes away that very possibility, and all ground for that miserable languishing hope, that it could ever have afforded them. Therefore is it left also wholly unimaginable, what principle can animate their design, other than a sensual humour, impatient of restraints, or of any obligation to be sober, just and honest, beyond what their own inclination, and (much mistaken) interest, or conveniency would lead them to.

By all which we have a sufficient measure of the persons from whom any opposition unto Religion can be expected,

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expected, and how much their authority, their example, or their scorn ought to signifie with us. And that a more valuable opposition can never be made; our experience, both that hitherto it hath not been, and that it would have been if it could, might render us tolerably secure. For surely it may well be supposed, that in a world so many ages lost in wickedness, all imaginable trials would have been made to disburthen it of Religion; and somewhat that had been specious, at least, to that purpose, had been hit upon; if the matter had been any way possible. And the more wicked the world hath been, so directly contrary, and so continually assaulted a principle, not yet vanquished, appears the more plainly invincible: And that the assaults have been from the lusts of men, rather than their reason, shews the more evidently, that their reason hath only wanted a ground to work upon; which if it could have been found, their lusts had certainly prest it to their service in this warfare; and not have endured rather, the molestation of continual checks and rebukes from it.

Nor need we yet to let our minds hang in suspense, or be in a dubious ex-

D

pecta-

pectation, that possibly, some or other great Wit may arise, that shall perform some great thing in this matter, and discover the groundlesness and folly of Religion, by plain and undeniable reasons that have not as yet been thought on: But betake our selves to a stricter and closer consideration of *our own grounds*, which, if we can once find to be certainly true, we may be sure they are of eternal truth, and no possible contrivance, or device, can ever make them false.

VI. Having therefore seen what *common consent* may contribute to the establishing of them joyntly; we may now apply our selves to consider and search into each of them (so far as they are capable of a distinct consideration) severally and apart. Having still this mark in our eye, our own confirmation, and excitation, in reference to what is the proper work and business of a Temple, *Religion, and Conversation with God*: How little soever any endeavour in this kind may be apt to signify with the otherwise minded.

VII. And, first *for the existence of God*; that we may regularly and with evidence make it out to our selves, *that he*  
*is,*



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*is, or doth exist, and may withal see what the belief of his existence will contribute towards the evincing of the reasonableness of erecting a Temple to him. It is requisite that we first settle a true notion of him in our minds; or be at an agreement with our selves, what it is that we mean, or would have to be signified by the name of God: otherwise we know not what we seek, nor when we have found him.*

And though we must beforehand professedly avow, that we take him to be such a one as we can never comprehend in our thoughts. That this knowledge is too excellent for us, or he is more excellent, than that we can perfectly know him; yet it will be sufficient to guide us in our search after his existence, if we can give such a description, or assign such certain characters of his being, as will severally, or together, distinguish him from *all things else*. For then we shall be able to call him *by his own name*, and say *this is God*. Whatever his being may contain more; or whatsoever other properties may belong to it, beyond what we can as yet compass, in our present thoughts of him.

VIII. And such an account we shall have of what we are enquiring after ; if we have the conception in our minds of *an eternal, uncaused, independent, necessary Being, that hath active power, life wisdom, goodness, and whatsoever other supposable excellency, in the highest perfection originally, in and of it self.*

Such a being we would with common consent express by the name of *God*. Even they that would profess to deny or doubt of his existence, yet must acknowledge *this* to be the *notion* of that which they deny, or doubt of. Or if they should say *this is not it*, or (which is all one) that they do not deny or doubt of the existence, of *such a Being as this* ; they on the other hand that would argue for his existence, may conclude the cause is yielded them. *This* being that, which they designed to contend for.

It must indeed be acknowledg'd, that some things belonging to the notion of God might have been more expressly named : But it was *not necessary* they should, being sufficiently included here, as will afterwards appear. *Nor perhaps, so convenient* ; some things, the express mention whereof is omitted, being such

as

as more captious persons might be apt at first to startle at ; who yet may, possibly, as they are insinuated, under other expressions, become by degrees, more inclinable to receive them afterwards. And however if this be not a *full and adequate notion* (as who can ever tell when we have an express, distinct particular notion of God, which we are sure is adequate and full?) it may however suffice, that it is a *true one*, as far as it goes, and such as cannot be mistaken for the *notion of any thing else*. And it will be more especially sufficient to our present purpose ; if enough be comprehended in it to recommend him to us as a *fit*, and *worthy object* of Religion ; and whereto a *Temple* ought to be designed. As it will appear there is, when also, we shall have added what is intended, concerning *his conversableness* with *men*. The ground whereof is also *in great part* included in this account of him ; so that the consideration of it cannot be wholly severed from that of his existence : as hath been intimated above. That is, that if such a Being exist, unto which this notion belongs ; it will sufficiently appear, he is such as that he *can converse with men* ; though it doth not thence, certainly follow that

*he will.* For it were a rash and bold adventure, to say he could not be God, if he did not condescend to such terms of reconciliation and converse with apostate creatures. Whereof, therefore, more is to be said, than the meer manifesting his existence, *in its own place.*

And as to *this*, we shall endeavour to proceed gradually, and in the most familiar and intelligible way we can.

I am not unapprehensive that I might here indeed, following great examples, have proceeded in *another Method* than that which I now chuse. And because we can have no true appropriate or distinguishing *Idea*, or conception of *Deity*, which doth not include *necessity of existence* in it, have gone that *shorter way*, immediately to have concluded the *existence* of God, from his *Idea it self*. And I see not, but treading those wary steps which the *incomparable Dr. Cudworth* † hath done, that Argument admits, in spite of Cavil, of being manag'd with demonstrative evidence; Yet since some most pertinaciously insist, that it is, at the bottom, but a *meer Sophism*; Therefore, (without detracting any thing from the force of it, as it stands in that excellent work and the writings of *some other noted Authors*) I have chosen to

† In his  
Intell.  
System.

to go *this other way*, as plainer and less liable to exception, though further about. And beginning lower, to evince from the *certain present existence* of things *not existing necessarily or of themselves*, their manifest dependence, on what *doth exist necessarily or of it self*. And how manifestly impossible it was that any thing should exist, now or hereafter to all eternity. If somewhat had not existed *necessarily, and of it self, from all Eternity*. And I trust, not only *this* will appear with competent evidence in the sequel of this Discourse, but also that this *necessary self-existent Being*, is God; a Being *absolutely perfect*, such to whom the rest of his *Idea* must belong: And to whom Religion or the *Honour of a Temple*, is due.

And because that was the point at which this Discourse principally aims, and wherein it finally terminates, not merely the discovering of *Atheism* but *Irreligion*. From an apprehension that as *to use and practice*, it was *all one* to acknowledge no God at all, as only *such a one* to whom *no Temple or Religion* could belong: It was therefore *besides my purpose*, to Consider the several *Forms or Schemes* of *Atheism*, that have been devised in any Age, as *that excellent Per-*



*son hath done ; and enough for my purpose,* to refute the *Epicurean Atheism*, or *Theism* ('tis indifferent which you call it) because that *Sect Master* while he was liberal in granting there *were Deities*, yet was so impious as to deny *Worship* to any, accounting *they were such* as between *whom, and man*, there could be no *conversation* ; on *their part*, by *Providence*, or on *mans*, by *Religion*. Therefore, if we shall have made it evident in the issue that *God is*, and is *conversable with men*, both the *Epicurean Atheism* vanishes from off the stage, and with it all *Atheism*, besides, and *Irreligion*.

IX. We therefore begin with *Gods existence*. For the evincing whereof we may,

1. Be most assured, that there hath been somewhat or other from all eternity, or that looking backward, *some-what of real being* must be confessed *eternal*. Let such, as have not been used to think of any thing more than what they could see with their eyes ; and to whom reasoning only seems difficult, because they have not tried what they can do in it ; but use their thoughts a little, and by moving them a few easie steps, they will soon find themselves assured  
of

of this, as that they *see*, or *hear*, or *understand*, or *are any thing*.

For being sure that something *now is* (that you *see*, for instance, or *are*, something.) You must then acknowledge that certainly, either *something always was*, and hath ever been, or been from all eternity; or else you must say, that *sometime, nothing was*; or that *all being once was not*. And so, since you find that something *now is*, that there was a time, *when any thing of being did begin to be*, that is, that *till that time*, there was nothing; But now, *at that time*, somewhat *first began* to be. For what can be plainer than that, if all being *sometime* was not, and *now*, some being is, every thing of being had a beginning? And thence it would follow that some being, *that is, the first that ever began to be*, did *of it self start up out of nothing*, or made it self to be, when before nothing was.

But now, do you not plainly see that it is altogether impossibly any thing should do so; that is, when it was as yet nothing, and when nothing at all as yet was, that it should *make it self*, or come into being *of it self*? For sure, *making it self*, is doing something. But can that which *is nothing*, do *any thing*? unto all *doing* there must be some *doer*.

Where-

Wherefore a thing *must be* before it can do any thing; and therefore it would follow that it was, before it was; or *was*, and *was not*, was *something*, and *nothing*, at the same time. Yea, and it was divers from it self. For a cause must be a distinct thing from that which is caused by it. Wherefore it is most apparent that *some being hath ever been*, or *did never begin to be*. Whence further,

X. 2. It is also evident, that some being was *uncaused*, or was ever of it self, without any cause. For what never was *from another* had never any cause, since nothing could be *its own cause*. And somewhat, as appears from what hath been said, never was from another. Or it may be plainly argued thus; That either *some being was uncaused*, or *all being was caused*. But if *all being were caused*, then *some one*, at least was the *cause of it self*: which hath been already shewn impossible. Therefore the expression commonly used concerning the *first Being* that it was *of it self*, is only to be taken *negatively*, that is, that it was not *of another*, not *positively*, as if it did sometime *make it self*. Or, what there is positive, signified by that form of speech, is only to be taken thus

thus, that it was a being of *that nature*, as that it was *impossible* it should ever *not have been*. Not that it did ever of *it self*, step out of *not being*, into *Being*: Of which more hereafter.

XI. 3. And now it is hence further evident that some being is *independent* upon any other, that is, whereas it already appears that some being did never depend on any other, as a *productive cause*; Or was not beholden to any other, that it might *come into Being*. It is thereupon equally evident that 'tis *simply independent*, or cannot be beholden to any for *its continued being*. For what did never need a *productive cause*, doth as little need a *sustaining* or *conserving cause*. And, to make this more plain, Either some being is *independent*, or all being is *dependent*. But there is *nothing* without the compass of *all being*, whereon it may depend: Wherefore to say, that all being doth depend, is to say it depends on *nothing*, that is, *that it depends not*. For to depend on nothing, is not to depend.

It is therefore a manifest contradiction to say that all being doth depend: against which it is no relief to say, that all beings do circularly depend on one another.

another. For so, however, the whole circle or sphere of being, should depend on nothing, or one at last depend on it self; which *negatively* taken, as before, is true, and the thing we contend for; that *one*, the common support of all the rest, depends not on *any thing without it self*. Whence also it is plainly consequent.

XII. That 4. Such a Being is *necessary*, or doth *necessarily exist*: that is, that it is of *such a nature* as that it *could not, or cannot but be*. For what is in being neither by its *own choice*, or *any others*, is *necessarily*. But what was not made by it self (which hath been shewn impossible that any thing should) nor by any other (as it hath been proved, something was not.) It is manifest it neither depended on its own choice, nor any others that it is. And therefore its existence is not owing to *choice* at all, but to the *necessity* of its own nature. Wherefore it is *always* by a simple, absolute, natural necessity; being of such a nature, to which it is altogether repugnant, and impossible ever not to have been, or ever to cease from being. And now having gone thus far, and being assured that hitherto we feel the



the ground firm under us ; that is, having gained a full certainty, that there is an *eternal, uncaused, independent, necessary Being*, and therefore actually, and everlastingly existing ; we may advance one step further, and with equal assurance, add,

XIII. 5. That this eternal, independent, uncaused, necessary Being, is *self-active*, that is, (which is at present meant, not such as acts upon it self, but that hath the power of acting upon other things, *in and of it self*, without deriving it from any other. Or at least that there is such a Being as is eternal, uncaused, &c. having the *power of action* in and of it self.

For either such a Being as hath been already evinced is *of it self active*, or *inactive*, or either hath the power of action of itself, or not. If we will say the latter, let it be considered what we say, and to what purpose we say it. First, we are to weigh what it is we affirm, when we speak of an eternal, uncaused, independent, necessary Being, that is of it self totally inactive, or destitute of any active power. If we will say there is *some such thing*, we will confess when we have called it *something*, it is

a very silly, despicable, idle *something*, and a *something*, (if we look upon it alone) as good as *nothing*. For there is but little odds between being nothing, and being able to do nothing. We will again confess, eternity, self-origination, independency, necessity of existence, to be very great and highly dignifying attributes; and that import a most unconceivable excellency. For what higher glory can we ascribe to any being, than to acknowledge it to *have been from eternity of it self*; without being beholden to any other, and to be such as that it can be, and cannot but be in the same state, self-subsisting, and self-sufficient to all eternity? And what unconceivable myriads of little senseless Deities must we upon that supposition admit (as would appear if it were fit to trouble the Reader with an explication of the nature and true no-

We will acknowledge an Impropriety in this word, & its conjugate *Self-Originate*, some-times hereafter used. which yet is recommended by their convenience; as they may perhaps find who shall make trial how to express the sense intended by them in other words. And they are used without suspicion, that it can be thought they are meant to signify as if ever God gave original to himself; but in the negative sense that he never received it from any other; yea, and that he is, what is more than equivalent to his Being, self-caused, *viz.* a Being of himself so excellent as not to need or be capable to admit any cause. *Vid. c. 4. Self. 3.* And with the expectation of the same allowance which hath been given to *αὐταΐτιος*, or other like words. We also take it for granted (which it may suffice to hint here once for all) that when we use here the word *Self-Subsistent*, it will be understood we intend by it (without Logical or Metaphysical nicety) not the meer exclusion of dependance on a subject, but on a cause.

tion

tion of *matter*, which the *being* now supposed, must be found to be!) But what can our reason either direct, or endure, that we should so uncongruouſly misplace ſo magnificent attributes as theſe? and aſcribe the prime glory of the moſt excellent Being, unto that which is next to nothing? What might further be ſaid to demonſtrate the impoſſibility of a Self-ſubſiſting and ſelf-origi-  
nal, unactive being, will be here unſeaſon-  
able, and *pre-occupying*. But if any in the mean time will be ſo fullen as to ſay ſuch a thing,

Let it 2. be conſidered to what purpoſe they ſay it. Is it to exclude a neceſſary ſelf-active being? But it can ſigni-  
fie nothing to that purpoſe. For ſuch a Being they will be forced to acknow-  
ledge, let them do what they can (be-  
ſides putting out their own eyes) not-  
withſtanding. For why will they ac-  
knowledge any neceſſary Being at all,  
that was ever of it ſelf? Is it not becauſe  
they cannot, otherwiſe, for their hearts  
tell how it was ever poſſible that any  
thing at all could come into being?  
But finding that ſomething is, they are  
compell'd to acknowledge that ſome-  
thing hath ever been, neceſſarily, and  
of it ſelf. No other account could be  
given

given how other things came to be. But what? doth it signifie any thing towards the giving an account of the original of all other things, to suppose only an eternal, self-subsisting unactive Being? Did that cause other things to be? Will not their own breath choak them if they attempt to utter the self-contradicting words, *an unactive cause*, (i. e. Efficient or Author) of any thing. And do they not see they are as far from their mark; or do no more towards the *assigning the original of all* other things, by supposing an eternal, unactive Being only; than if they supposed none at all. That what can *do nothing*, can no more be the productive cause of another, than that which *is nothing*? Wherefore by the same Reason that hath constrained us to acknowledge an eternal, uncaused independent, necessary Being, we are also unavoidably led to acknowledge *this Being to be self-active*, or such as hath the *power of action in, and of it self*. Or that there is certainly such a Being, that is the cause of all the things which our sense tells us are, besides, *existent in the world*.

XIV. For what else is left us to say or think? will we think fit to say, that all things we behold, were, as they are, *necessarily existent* from all eternity? That were to speak against our own eyes, which continually behold the rise and fall of living things, of whatsoever sort or kind, that can come under their notice. And it were to speak *against the thing it self*, that we say, and to say, and unsay the same thing in the same breath. For all the things we behold are in some respect or other (internal, or external) continually changing, and therefore could never long be beheld *as they are*. And to say then, they have been continually changing from eternity, and yet have been necessarily, is unintelligible, and flat non-sense. For what is necessarily, is always the same; and what is in this, or that, posture necessarily, (that is by an intrinsic, simple and absolute necessity, which must be here meant) must be ever so. Wherefore to suppose the world in this, or that, state necessarily; and yet that such a state is changeable, is an impossible, and self-contradicting supposition. †

(though that be none of our present business) plain evidence that there can be no such thing as necessary alterable matter, may be examined by such as think fit to give themselves the diversion.

† And whether by the way this will not afford us



version. For let it be considered, if every part and particle that makes up the matter of this universe, were it self a necessary being, and of it self from all eternity, it must have not only its simple being, but its being such or such, of it self necessarily, or rather every thing of it, or any way belonging to it, must be its very simple being it self. For whence should it receive any accession to it self when it is supposed equally independent upon its fellows, as any of them upon it? Suppose then only their various intercurrent motion among themselves, requisite to prepare them to, and unite them in the composition of particular bodies, and no other change of any other individual particle needful thereto, but only of their figure, place, and situation, till they shall come aptly to be disposed in the now attempted composition. How is even this change possible? For suppose one of these particles from eternity of such or such a figure, as triangular, hooked, &c. How can it lose any thing from it self, or suffer any alteration of its figure which essentially and necessarily belonged to it from eternity? That to which 'tis necessary to be such 'tis impossible to it not to be such. Or suppose no alteration of figure (which *Epicurus* admits not) were necessary; but of situation and motion till it become conveniently situate. Even this change also will be simply impossible. Because you can frame no imagination of the existence of this or that particle, but you must suppose it in some or other *ubi*, or point of space, and if it be necessarily, it is here necessarily; for what is simply no where is nothing. But if it be here necessarily (that is in this or that point of space, for in some or other it must be, and it cannot be here and there at once) it must be here eternally, and can never not be here. Therefore we can have no notion of necessary alterable or moveable matter, which is not inconsistent and repugnant to it self. Therefore also motion must proceed from an immovable mover, as hath been (though upon another ground) concluded of old. But how action *ad extra* stands with the immutability of the Deity must be fetcht from the consideration of other perfections belonging thereto. Of which *Metaphysicians* and *Schoolmen* may be consulted, discoursing at large: See *Suarez. Ledesma de divina perfectione*, with many more at leisure. Whatsoever difficulty we may apprehend in this case. Or if we cannot so easily conceive how an eternal mind foreseeing perfectly all futurity, together with an eternal efficacious determination of will concerning the existence of such and such things to such an instant or point of time, can suffice to their production without a super-added efflux of power at that instant: which would seem to infer somewhat of mutation; yet as the former of these cannot be demonstrated insufficient (nor shall we ever reckon

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reckon our selves pinch'd in this matter till we see that plainly and fully done.) So they are very obstinately blind that cannot see upon the addition of the latter the vast difference of these two cases, *viz.* the facile silent egress of a sufficient power in pursuance to a calm, complacential, eternal purpose; for the production of this creation, by which the Agent acts not upon it self, but upon its own creature made by its own action; and the eternal blind ungovern'd action of matter upon it self; by which it is perpetually changing it self, while yet it is supposed necessarily what it was before: And how much more easily conceiveable *that* is, than *this*. How also liberty of action consists with necessity of existence, divers have shewn: to which purpose somewhat not inconsiderable may be seen, *Ficin. lib. 2. cap. 12. de immortal. &c.* But in this there can be little pretence to imagine a difficulty. For our own being, though not *simply*, yet *as to us* is necessary, *i.e.* it is impos'd upon us; for we come not into being by our own choice; and yet are conscious to our selves of no prejudice hereby to our liberty of acting. Yea and not only doth the former consist with this latter, but is inferr'd by it. Of which see *Gibbens de libert. Dei, & creat.*

And to say any thing is changing from eternity, signifies it is always undergoing a change which is never past over, that is, that it is eternally unchang'd, and is ever the same. For the least imaginable degree of change, is some change. What is in any the least respect changed, is not in every respect the same: suppose then any thing in this present state or posture, and that it is eternally changing in it; either a new state and posture is acquired, or not. If it be, the former was temporary, and hath an end; and therefore the just and adequate measure of it was not eternity, which hath no end; much less of the change of it, or the transition from

the one state, to the other. But if no new state or posture be acquired (which any the least gradual alteration would make) then it is *eternally unchanged* in any the least degree. Therefore *eternal changing* is a manifest contradiction.

But if it be said though eternity be not the measure of one change; it may be of infinite changes endlessly succeeding one another. Even *this* also will be found contradictory, and impossible. For (not to trouble the Reader with the more intricate controversie of the possibility or impossibility of infinite or eternal succession, about which they who have a mind may consult others.\*)

\* *Parker*

*Tentam.*

*Physico-*

*Theolog.*

*Derodon.*

*Philos.*

*cont. Dr.*

*More's*

*Enchirid.*

*Metaphys.*

If this signifie any thing to the present purpose, it must mean the infinite or eternal changes of a *necessary being*. And how these very terms do clasp with one another, methinks any sound mind might apprehend at the first mention of them; And how manifestly repugnant the things are, may be collected from what hath been said; and especially from what was thought more fit to be annexed in the Margin

But now since we find that the present state of things is changeable, and actually changing, and that what is changable is not necessarily, and of it self.

And

And since it is evident that there is some necessary Being, otherwise nothing could ever have been, and that without action nothing could be from it. Since also all change imports somewhat of passion, and all passion supposes action, and all action, active power, and active power an original seat or subject, that is *self-active*, or that hath the *power of action* in and of it self; For there could be no derivation of it from that which hath it not, and no first-derivation, but from that which hath it originally of it self. And a first derivation there must be, since all things that are or ever have been furnisht with it, and not of themselves, must either mediately or immediately have derived it from that which had it of it self. It is therefore manifest that there is a *necessary self active Being*, the cause and Author of this perpetually variable state and frame of things. And hence,

XV. 6. Since we can frame no notion of *life* which *self-active power* doth not, at least, comprehend (as upon trial we shall find that we cannot) it is consequent that this Being is also *originally vital*, and *the root of all vitality*, such as hath life in or of it self, and

† Which from whence it is propagated to every  
will also other living thing. †  
prove it to be a *Spi-*

*rit*; unto which order of Beings essential vitality, or that life be essential to them, seems as distinguishing a property between it and a body, as any other we can fasten upon, that is, that tho' a body may be truly said to live; yet it lives by a life that is accidental, and separable from it. So as that it may cease to live, and yet be a body still; whereas a Spirit lives by its own essence; so that it can no more cease to live than to be. And as where that essence is borrowed and derived only, as 'tis with all created Spirits, so its life must needs be therewithall. So the eternal self-subsisting Spirit, lives necessarily, and of it self, according as, necessarily and of it self, *it is*, or *hath its being*.

Which is only annotated, with a design not to trouble this discourse with any disquisition concerning the nature and other properties of a spiritual Being. Of which enough hath been, with great evidence, said, by the incomparable Dr. *More*.

And so as we plainly see that this sensible world did sometime begin to be, 'tis also evident it took its beginning from a Being essentially vital, and active, that had it self no beginning. Nor can we make a difficulty to conclude that this Being, (which now we have shewn, is active, and all action implies some power) is

XVI. 7. Of vast and mighty *Power* (we will not say infinite, lest we should step too far at once; not minding *now* to discuss whether creation require infinite power) when we consider and contemplate the vastness of the work  
per-



performed by it. Unto which (if we were to make our estimate by nothing else) we must, at least, judge this power to be proportionable. For when our eyes behold an effect exceeding the power of any cause which they can behold, our mind must step in and supply the defect of our feeble sense; so as to make a judgment there is a cause *we see not*, equal to this effect. As when we behold a great and magnificent fabrick, and entring in we see not the master or any living thing (which was Cicero's Observation in reference to this present purpose) besides Mice or Weasels, we will not think that Mice or Weasels built it. Nor need we in a matter so obvious, insist further. But only when our severer Reason hath made us confess, our further contemplation should make us admire a power which is at once both so apparent, and so stupendous.

*De natura  
Deorum.*

*Corollary.* And now from what hath been hitherto discoursed, it seems a plain and necessary Consequence, That this world had a cause divers from the matter whereof it is composed.

For otherwise matter that hath been more generally taken to be of it self altogether unactive, must be stated the only cause and fountain of all the action and motion that is now to be found in the whole Universe. Which is a conceit wild and absurd enough; not only as it opposes the common judgment of such as have with the greatest diligence enquired into things of this nature, But as being in it self manifestly impossible to be true.

As would easily appear if it were needful to press farther Dr. *More's* reasonings to this purpose; which he hath done sufficiently for himself.

And also that otherwise all the great and undeniable changes which continually happen in it must proceed from its own constant and eternal action upon it self while it is yet feigned to be a necessary being; with the notion whereof they are notoriously inconsistent. Which therefore we taking to be most clear, may now the more securely proceed to what follows.

Both in  
his *Immor-*  
*tal*ity of  
the Soul:  
and *En-*  
*chirid. Me-*  
*taphys.*

CHAP.

## CHAP. III.

Wisdom asserted to belong to this Being. The production of this world by a mighty Agent destitute of Wisdom impossible. On consideration of, 1. What would be adverse to this production. 2. What would be wanting; some effects to which a designing cause will, on all hands, be confessed necessary, having manifest characters of skill and design upon them. Absurd here to except the works of nature. Wherein at least equal characters of Wisdom and design are to be seen, as in any the most confessed pieces of Art, Instanced in the frame and Motion of heavenly bodies. A mean, unphilosophical temper to be more taken with novelties than common things of greater importance. Further instance in the composition of the bodies of Animals. Two contrary causes of mens not acknowledging the Wisdom of their Maker herein. Progress is made from the consideration of the parts and frame, to the powers and functions of Terrestrial Creatures. Growth, Nutrition, Propagation of kind. Spontaneous motion, Sensation. The pretence considered,  
that

*that the bodies of Animals are machines.*

1. *How improbable it is.* 2. *How little to the purpose.* The powers of the humane soul. It appears, notwithstanding them, it had a cause; By them, a wise and intelligent cause. It is not matter. That not capable of Reason. They not here reflected on who think reasonable souls made of refined matter, by the Creator. Not being matter, nor arising from thence it must have a Cause that is intelligent. Goodness also belonging to this Being.

1. **W**E therefore add, That this Being is *Wise* and *Intelligent* as well as powerful; upon the very view of this world it will appear *so vast power* was guided by *equal wisdom* in the framing of it; Though this is wont to be the principal labour in evincing the existence of a Deity, *viz.* the proving that this universe owes its rise to a wise and designing cause; as may be seen in *Cicero's* excellent performance in this kind, and in divers later Writers. Yet the placing so much of their endeavour herein, seems in great part to have proceeded hence, that this hath been chosen for the great medium to prove that it had a cause divers from it self. But  
if

if that once be done a shorter way, and it fully appear that this world is not it self a necessary Being, having the power of all the action and motion to be found in it, *of it self*; (which already seems plain enough.) And it do most evidently thence also appear to have had a cause foreign to, or distinct from it self; though we shall not therefore the more carelessly consider this subject; yet no place of doubt seems to remain, but that this was an *Intelligent cause*, and that this world was the product of wisdom and counsel, and not of meer power alone. For what imagination can be more grossly absurd, than to suppose this orderly frame of things to have been the result of so mighty power, not accompanied or guided by wisdom and counsel? that is (as the case must now unavoidably be understood) that there is some Being necessarily existent, of an essentially active nature, of unconceivably vast and mighty power and vigour, destitute of all understanding and knowledge, and consequently of any self-moderating-principle, but acting always by the necessity of its own nature, and therefore to its very uttermost, that raised up all the alterable matter of the universe (to whose nature



nature it is plainly repugnant to be of it self, or exist necessarily) out of nothing; and by the utmost exertion of that ungovern'd power, put all the parts and particles of that matter into a wild hurry of impetuous motion, by which they have been compacted and digested into particular beings in that variety and order which we now behold. And surely to give this account of the worlds original, is, as *Cicero* speaks, not to consider, but to cast lots what to say. And were as mad a supposition, "As if one  
 " should suppose the one and twenty  
 " Letters, formed (as the same Author  
 " elsewhere speaks) in great numbers,  
 " of Gold, or what you please else, and  
 " cast of any careless fashion together,  
 " and that of these loosely shaken out  
 " upon the ground, *Ennius* his *Annals*  
 " should result, so as to be distinctly legible as now we see them. Nay it were the supposition of a thing a thousand fold more manifestly impossible.

II. 2. For before we consider the gross absurdity of such a supposed production, that is, that a thing should be brought to pass by so meer a casualty, that so evidently requires an exquisitely formed, and continued design, even tho' there

there were nothing positively to resist or hinder it. Let it be considered what there will be that cannot but most certainly hinder any such production. To this purpose we are to consider, That it is a vast power which so generally moves the diffused matter of the Universe.

Hereof make an estimate by considering what is requisite to the continual whirling about of such huge bulks as this whole massie globe of earth (according to some:) Or, which is much more strange, the Sun (according to others) with that unconceiveably swift motion which this supposition makes necessary, together with the other Planets, and the innumerable heavenly Bodies besides, that are subject to the laws of a continual motion. Adding hereto how mighty a power it is which must be sufficient to all the productions, motions, and actions of all other things.

Again, consider that all this motion, and motive power must have some source and fountain diverse from the dull and sluggish matter moved thereby, unto which it already hath appeared impossible it should originally and essentially belong.

Next

Next that the *mighty active being*, which hath been proved necessarily existent, and whereto it must *first* belong, if we suppose it destitute of the self-moderating principle of Wisdom and Counsel, cannot but be always exerting its motive power, invariably and to the same degree: that is, to its very utmost, and can never cease or fail to do so. For its act knows no limit but that of its power (if this can have any) and its power is essential to it, and its essence is necessary.

Further that the motion impressed upon the matter of the universe must hereupon necessarily have received a continual increase, ever since it came into being.

That supposing this motive power to have been exerted from eternity, it must have been increased long ago to an infinite excess.

That hence the coalition of the particles of matter for the forming of any thing had been altogether impossible. For let us suppose this exerted motive power to have been, *any instant*, but barely sufficient for such a formation, because that could not be dispatched in *an instant*, it would by its continual momentarily increase, be grown so over-sufficient, as in the *next instant*, to dissipate

dissipate the particles, but now beginning to unite.

At least, it would be most apparent, that if ever such a frame of things as we now behold, could have been produc'd; that *motive power*, increased to so infinite an excess, must have shattered the whole frame in pieces, many an age ago; or rather, never have permitted, that such a thing, *as we call an age*, could possibly have been.

Our experience gives us not to observe any so *destructive*, or *remarkable changes*, in the course of nature. And this (as was long ago foretold) is the great argument of the Atheistical scoffers in these latter days, *that things are as they were from the beginning of the Creation to this day*. But let it be soberly weigh'd, how it is possible the *general consistency*, which we observe things are at, throughout the universe, and their steady orderly posture, can stand with this momentarily increase of motion.

And that such *an increase* could not (upon the supposition we are now opposing) but have been, is most evident. For, not to insist that nothing of *imprest motion* is ever *lost*, but only *imparted* to other things (which, they that suppose it,

it do not *therefore* suppose, as if they thought, being *once imprest*, it could continue *of its self*, but that there is a constant, equal, supply from the *first mover*) we will admit that there is a *continual decrease*, or loss, but never to the degree of its continual increase. For we see when we throw a stone out of our hand, whatever of the imprest force it do impart to the air, through which it makes its way, or not being receiv'd, vanishes of it self, it yet retains a part a considerable time, that carries it all the length of its journey, and *all* does not vanish, and die away on the sudden. Therefore when we *here* consider the continual momentarily renewal of the same force, always *necessarily* going forth from the *same mighty Agent*, without any moderation, or restraint; every following *impetus* doth so immediately overtake the former, that whatever we can suppose lost, is yet so abundantly over-supplied, that upon the whole, it cannot fail to be ever growing, and to have grown to that all-destroying excess before-mentioned. Whence therefore that famed restorer and improver of some principles of the ancient Philosophy, hath seen a necessity to acknowledge it, as a manifest thing, "That  
" God



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“ God himself is the universal and pri-  
“ mary cause of all the motions that are  
“ in the world, who in the beginning crea-  
“ ted matter, together with motion and  
“ rest; and doth now by his ordinary con-  
“ course only, continue so much of moti-  
“ on and rest in it, as he first put into it.  
“ --For (saith he) we understand it as a  
“ perfection in God, not only that he  
“ is unchangeable in himself, but that  
“ he works after a most constant and  
“ unchangeable manner. So that, ex-  
“ cepting those changes, which either  
“ evident Experience, or Divine Reve-  
“ lation renders certain, and which we  
“ *know* or *believe* to be without change,  
“ in the Creator, we ought to suppose  
“ none in his Works, lest thereby any  
“ inconstancy should be argued in him-  
“ self. Whereupon he grounds the  
*laws*, and *rules* concerning motion,  
which he afterwards lays down, where-  
of we referr'd to *one*, a little above.

It is therefore evident, that as with-  
out the supposition of a *self-active* Be-  
ing there could be no such thing as  
motion. So without the supposition  
of an *Intelligent* Being (that is, that the  
same Being be both *self-active*, and *in-*  
*telligent*) there could be no *regular mo-*  
*tion*; *such* as is absolutely necessary to

F the

*D. Crates  
Princip.  
Philosoph.  
part 2.*

the forming, and continuing of any the compacted, bodily substances, which our eyes behold every day: Yea, or of any whatsoever, suppose we their figures, or shapes, to be as rude, deformed, and useless, as we can imagine; much less, *such* as the *exquisite compositions*, and the *exact order* of things, in the Universe, do evidently require, and discover.

III. And if there were no such thing carried in this supposition, as is *positively adverse*, to what is supposed, so as most certainly to hinder it (as we see plainly there is) yet the *meer want* of *what is necessary* to such a production, is enough to render it *impossible*, and the supposition of it *absurd*. For it is not only absurd to suppose a production, which somewhat shall *certainly* resist, and hinder; but which wants a cause to effect it: And it is not *less absurd* to suppose it effected by a manifestly *insufficient* and unproportionable cause, than by *none at all*. For as nothing can be produced without a cause, so no cause can work above or beyond its own capacity, and natural aptitude. Whatsoever therefore is ascribed to any cause, above and beyond its ability, *all that surplusage* is ascribed to no cause at all

all. And so an effect, in *that part at least*, were supposed without a cause. And if then it follow when an effect is produced, *that it had a cause*; why doth it not equally follow, when an effect is produced, having manifest characters of wisdom and design upon it, that it had a *wise and designing cause*? If it be said, there be some fortuitous or casual (at least undesigned) productions, that look like the effects of wisdom and contrivance, but indeed are not, as the Birds so orderly and seasonably making their Nests, the Bees their Comb, and the Spider its Web, which are capable of no design. That exception needs to be well proved before it be admitted; and that it be plainly demonstrated, both that these creatures are not capable of design; and that there is not *an universal designing cause*, from whose directive as well as operative influence, no imaginable effect, or event can be exempted; (In which case it will no more be necessary, that every creature that is observed *steadily to work towards an end* should, it self, design, and know it; than that an Artificers tools should know what he is doing with them, but if they do not, 'tis plain he must.) And surely it lies up-

on them who so except, to prove in this case what they say, and not be so precarious as to beg, or think us so easie, as to grant so much, only because they have thought fit to say it, or would fain have it so. That is, that *this*, or *that strange event* happened, without any *designing cause*.

IV. But however, I would demand of such as make this exception whether they think there be any effect at all, to which a *designing cause* was necessary? or which they will judge impossible to have been, otherwise, produced; than by the direction, and contrivance of wisdom and counsel? I little doubt but there are thousands of things, laboured and wrought by the hand of man, concerning which they would presently, upon first sight, pronounce they were the effects of *skill*, and not of *chance*: yea, if they only considered their *frame*, and *shape*, though they, yet, understood not their *use*, and *end*. They would surely think (at least) *some effects* or *other*, sufficient to argue to us a *designing cause*. And would they but soberly consider and resolve, what *characters* or foot-steps of wisdom, and design might be reckon'd *sufficient* to put us out of doubt;

doubt; would they not, upon comparing, be brought to acknowledge; there are no where *any*, more conspicuous and manifest; than in the things daily in view, that go ordinarily, with us, under the name of the *works of nature*? whence it is plainly consequent, that what men commonly call *universal Nature*, if they would be content no longer to lurk in the darkness of an obscure, and uninterpreted word; they must confess is nothing else but *common Providence*, that is the *universal power*, which is every where active in the world, in conjunction with the *unerring wisdom*, which guides and moderates all its exertions and operations; or the *wisdom* which directs and governs *that power*. Otherwise, when they see cause to acknowledge that such an exact order and disposition of parts, in very neat and elegant compositions, doth plainly argue wisdom and skill in the contrivance; only they will distinguish and say, it is so in the *effects of art*; but not *of nature*. What is this but to deny in particular, what they granted in general? to make what they have said signify nothing, more than if they had said, such exquisite order of parts is the effect of wisdom, where it is the effect of



wisdom, but it is not the effect of wisdom, where it is not the effect of wisdom? and to *trifle*, instead of *giving a reason*, why things are so and so? And whence take they their advantage for this trifling, or do hope to hide their folly in it; but that they think, while what is meant by art, is known, what is meant by *nature*, cannot be known? But if it be not known, how can they tell but their *distinguishing members* are co-incident, and run into one? yea, and if they would allow the thing it self to speak, and the effect to confess, and dictate the name of its own cause; how plain is it that they do run into one, and that the expression imports no impropriety which we somewhere find in *Cicero*, *The art of Nature*, or rather that *nature* is nothing else but *Divine Art*, at least in as near an analogy as there can be, between any things Divine and Humane? For, that this matter (even the *thing it self*, waving for the present the consideration of *names*) may be a little more narrowly discuss'd, and search'd into: Let some curious piece of workmanship be offered to such a Sceptick's view, the making whereof he did not see, nor of any thing like it, and we will suppose him, not told that this was made by the hand of any man,

nor

nor that he hath any thing to guide his judgment, about the way of its becoming what it is; but only his *own view* of the thing it self; and yet he shall presently without hesitation pronounce, *This was the effect of much skill.* I would here enquire *why do you so pronounce?* or what is the reason of this your judgment? surely he would not say, he hath no reason at all for this so confident, and unwavering determination. For then he would not be *determined*, but speak by chance, and be *indifferent* to say that, or any thing else. Somewhat or other there must be, that, when he is askt, *is this the effect of skill?* shall so suddenly, and irresistibly captivate him into an assent, *that it is*, that he cannot think otherwise. Nay if a thousand men were askt the same question, they would as undoubtingly say the same thing? and then, since there is a *reason* for this *judgment*; what can be devised to *be the reason*; but that there are so *manifest characters*, and *evidences of skill* in the compofure, as are not attributable to any thing else? Now here I would further demand, is there any thing in this reason, yea, or no? Doth it it signifie any thing, or is it of any value to the purpose for

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which

which it is alledg'd ? surely it is of very great, in as much as, when it is considered, it leaves it not in a mans power, to think any thing else, and what can be said more potently, and efficaciously to demonstrate ? But now, if *this reason* signifie *any thing*, it signifies *thus much* ; that wheresoever there are *equal* characters, and *evidences of skill* (at least where there are equal) a *skillful Agent* must be acknowledged. And so it will (in spite of cavil) conclude *universally* (and abstractly from what we can suppose distinctly signified by the terms of *Art*, and *Nature*) that whatsoever effect hath *such*, or *equal* characters of *skill* upon it, did proceed from a *skillful cause*: That is, that if this effect be said to be from a skillful cause, *as such* (*viz.* as having *manifest characters of skill* upon it) then, *every such effect* (*viz.* that hath equally manifest characters of skill upon it) must be, with equal reason, concluded to be from a skillful cause.

We will acknowledge *skill to act*, and *wit to contrive*, very distinguishable things, and in reference to some works (as the making some curious *automaton*, or self-moving Engine) are commonly lodg'd in divers subjects, that is the *contrivance* exercises the *wit*, and *invention* of

of *one*, and the *making*, the *manual dexterity* and *skill* of *others*. But the manifest characters of both, will be seen in the effect. That is the curious elaborateness of *each several part* shews the *latter*, and the *order*, and *dependance* of *parts*, and their conspiracy to *one common end*, the *former*. Each betokens design (or at least the Smith or Carpenter must be understood to design his own part, that is, to do, as he was directed.) *Both together*, do plainly bespeak an Agent, *that knew what he did*. And that the thing was not done by chance; or was not the casual product, of only being busie at random, or making a careless stir, without aiming at any thing. And this, no man that is in his wits, would upon sight of the whole frame, more doubt to assent unto, than that two and two make four. And he would certainly be thought mad, that should profess to think, that only by some one's making a blustering stir among several small fragments of brass, iron, and wood these parts happened to be thus curiously formed, and came together into this frame, of their own accord.

Or lest this should be thought to intimate too rude a representation of  
their

their conceit, who think this world to have fallen into this frame and order, wherein it is, by the agitation of the moving parts, or particles of matter, without the direction of a wise mover; and that we may also make the case as plain as is possible to the most ordinary capacity, we will suppose (for instance) that one who had never before seen a watch or any thing of that sort, hath now this *little engine* first offered to his view; can we doubt, but he would upon the meer sight of its figure, structure, and the very curious workmanship which we will suppose appearing in it, presently acknowledge the Artificers hand? But if he were also made to understand the *use* and *purpose* for which it serves; and it were distinctly shewn him, how *each thing* contributes, and *all things*, in this little fabrick, concur to this purpose, the exact measuring and dividing of time, by minutes, hours, and months, he would certainly both *confess*, and *praise* the great ingenuity of the first inventor. But now if a by-stander, beholding him in this admiration, would undertake to shew a profounder reach, and strain of wit, and should say, Sir, you are mistaken concerning the composition of  
this



this so much admired piece; ; it was not made or designed by the hand or skill of any one; there were only an innumerable company of little atoms, or very small bodies, much too small to be perceived by your sense, that were busily frisking, and plying too and fro, about the place of its nativity; and by a strange chance (or a stranger fate, and the necessary laws of that motion which they were unavoidably put into, by a certain boisterous, undesigning mover) they fell together into this small bulk, so as to compose it into this very shape and figure, and with this same number and order of parts, which you now behold. One squadron of these busie particles (little thinking what they were about) agreeing to make up one wheel, and another some other, in that proportion which you see. Others of them also falling, and becoming fixed, in so happy a posture and situation, as to describe the several figures, by which the little moving fingers, point out the hour of the day, and day of the month. And all conspired to fall together, each into its own place, in so lucky a juncture, as that the *regular motion* failed not to ensue, which we see is now observed in  
it.

it. What man is either so *wise*, or so *foolish* (for it is hard to determine whether the *excess*, or *defect*, should best qualifie him to be of this faith) as to be capable of being made believe this piece of natural history? And if one should give this account of the production of such a trifle, would he not be thought *in jest*? But if he persist, and solemnly profess that *thus* he takes it to have been, would he not be thought in *good earnest* mad? And let but any sober reason judge whether we have not unspeakably more manifest madness to contend against in such as suppose this world, and the bodies of living creatures, to have fallen into this frame, and orderly disposition of parts wherein they are, without the direction of a wise and designing cause? And whether there be not an incomparably greater number of most wild and arbitrary suppositions, in *their fiction*, than in *this*? Besides the innumerable supposed repetitions, of the same strange chances all the world over; even as numberless, not only as productions, but as the changes that continually happen to all the things produced. And if the concurrence of atoms could make this world, why not (for it is but little  
to

to mention such a thing as *this*) a *Porch*, or a *Temple*, or an *House*, or a *City*, (as *Tully* speaks in the before recited place) which were less operous, and much more easie performances?

V. It is not to be supposed that all should be *Astronomers*, *Anatomists*, or *natural Philosophers* that shall read these lines. And therefore it is intended not to insist upon *particulars*, and to make as little use as is possible of *terms*, that would only be agreeable to *that supposition*. But surely such *general easie* reflections on the frame of the universe, and the order of parts in the bodies of all sorts of living creatures, as the meanest, ordinary, understanding is capable of, would soon discover incomparably greater evidence of wisdom, and design in the contrivance of these, than in that of a *watch*, or a *clock*. And if there were any whose understandings are but of that size and measure, as to suppose that the whole frame of the heavens serves to no other purpose than to be of *some such* use as *that*, to us mortals here on earth; if they would but allow themselves leisure to think and consider, might discern the most convincing and amazing discoveries

veries of wise *contrivance* and *design* (as well as of vastest might, and power) in disposing things into so apt a subserviency to that meaner end. And that so exact a knowledge is had thereby of *times* and *seasons*, days and years, as that the simplest Idiot in a Country, may be able to tell you, when the light of the Sun is withdrawn from his eyes, at what time it will return, and when it will look in at such a window, and when at the other. And by what degrees, his days and nights shall either increase, or be diminished. And what proportion of time he shall have for his labours in this season of the year, and what in that; without the least suspicion or fear that it shall ever fall out, otherwise.

But that some, in later days, whose more enlarged minds have by diligent search, and artificial helps, got clearer notices (even than most of the more learned of former times) concerning the true frame and vastness of the Universe, the matter, nature, and condition of the heavenly bodies, their situation, order, and laws of motion; and the great probability of their serving to nobler purposes, than the greater part of learned men, have ever dreamt of before;

fore; That I say any of these should have chosen it for the employment of their great intellects, to devise ways of excluding *intellectual power* from the contrivance of this frame of things, having so great advantages beyond the most of mankind besides, to contemplate and adore the great Author and Lord of all; is one of the greatest wonders that comes under our notice. And might tempt even a sober mind, to prefer vulgar and popular ignorance, before their learned, philosophical deliration.

VI. Though yet, indeed, not *their Philosophy*, by which they would be distinguished from the common sort, but what they have in common with them, ought in justice to bear the blame. For is it not evident, how much soever they reckon themselves exalted above the vulgar sort; that their miserable shifting in this matter proceeds only from what is most meanly so, *i. e.* their labouring under the *most vulgar and meanest diseases* of the mind, *disregard of what is common*, and an aptness to place more in the strangeness of new, unexpected, and surprizing events, than in things unspeakably more considerable,  
that



that are of every days observation? Than which nothing agrues a more abject, unphilosophical temper.

For let us but suppose (what no man can pretend is more impossible, and what any man must confess is less considerable, than what our eyes daily see) that in some part of the air, near this earth, and within such limits, as that the *whole Scene* might be conveniently beheld at one view, there should suddenly appear a little globe of pure flaming light resembling that of the Sun, and suppose it fixt as a center to another body, or moving about that other, as its centre (as this or that hypothesis best pleases us) which we could plainly perceive to be a proportionably-little earth, beautified with little Trees and Woods, flowry Fields, and flowing rivulets; with larger lakes into which these discharge themselves. And suppose we the other Planets all of proportionable bigness to the narrow limits assigned them, placed at their due distances, and playing about this supposed earth or Sun, so as to measure their shorter, and soon absolved days, months, and years, or two, twelve, or thirty years, according to their supposed lesser circuits. Would they not presently, and with great amazement,

mazement, confess an intelligent contriver and maker of this whole frame, above a *Posidonius*, or any mortal? And have we not in the present frame of things, a demonstration of Wisdom and Counsel, as far exceeding that which is now supposed, as the making some *toy*, or *banble* to please a child, is less an argument of wisdom, than the contrivance of somewhat that is of apparent and universal use? Or, if we could suppose this present state of things to have but newly begun, and our selves pre-existent, so that we could take notice of the very passing of things out of horrid confusion into the comely order they are now in, would not this put the matter out of doubt? (And that *this state* had once a beginning needs not be proved over again.) But might, what would yesterday have been the effect of wisdom, better have been brought about by chance five or six thousand years, or any longer time ago? It speaks not want of evidence in the thing, but want of consideration, and of exercising our understandings, if what were *new* would not only convince but astonish, and what is *old*, of the same importance, doth not so much as convince!

VII. And let them that understand any thing of the composition of an humane body (or indeed of any living creature) but bethink themselves whether there be not equal contrivance, at least, appearing in the compofure of that admirable fabrick, as of any the most admired *machine*, or *engine*, devised and made by humane wit, and skill. If we pitch upon any thing of known and common use, as suppose again a *Clock*, or *Watch*; which is no sooner feen than it is acknowledg'd (as hath been said) the effect of a *designing cause*; will we not confels as much, of the *body of a man*? Yea, what comparison is there; when in the structure of some one single member, as an hand, a foot, an eye, or ear, there appears upon a diligent search, unspeakably greater curiosity, whether we consider the variety of parts, their exquisite figuration, or their apt disposition to the distinct uses and ends these members serve for, than is to be seen in any *Clock* or *Watch*? Concerning which uses of the several parts in mans body, *Galen* so largely discoursing in seventeen Books inserts on the by, this *Epiphonema*, upon the mention of one particular instance

Lib. 3.  
De usu  
part. ex  
Lacun.  
Epit.

stance of our most wise Makers provident care ; “ Unto whom (saith he) I  
“ compose these Commentaries (meaning his present work of unfolding the useful figuration of the humane body) “ as certain Hymns (or Songs of  
“ praise) esteeming true Piety more to  
“ consist in this, that I first may know,  
“ and then declare to others, his Wisdom, Power, Providence and Goodness, than in sacrificing to him many  
“ Hecatombs.---And in the ignorance  
“ whereof there is greatest impiety, rather than in abstaining from Sacrifice. Nor (as he adds in the close of that excellent work) is the most perfect natural Artifice to be seen in man only, but you may find the like industrious design and wisdom of the Author, in any living creature which you shall please to dissect. And by how much the less it is, so much the greater admiration shall it raise in you, which those Artists shew that describe some great thing (contractedly) in a very small space : As that person (saith he) who lately engraved *Phaeton* carried in his Chariot, with his four horses, upon a little Ring. A most incredible sight ! But there is nothing in matters of this nature, more strange than in

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“ the structure of the leg of a Flea ?  
 (How much more might it be said of  
 all its inward parts ?) Therefore (as he  
 adds) “ The greatest commodity of  
 “ such a work, accrues not to *Physicians*,  
 “ but to them who are *studious of na-*  
 “ *ture, viz.* the knowledge of our Ma-  
 “ kers perfection, and that (as he had  
 “ said a little above) it establishes the  
 “ principle of the *most perfect Theology* ;  
 “ *which Theology* (saith he) is much  
 “ more excellent than *all Medicine*.

It were too great an undertaking,  
 and beyond the designed limits of this  
 discourse (though it would be to excel-  
 lent purpose, if it could be done with-  
 out amusing terms, and in that easie, fa-  
 miliar way as to be capable of com-  
 mon use) to pursue, and trace distinct-  
 ly the prints and foot-steps of the ad-  
 mirable Wisdom, which appears in the  
 structure and frame of this outer Tem-  
<sup>i Cor. 6.</sup>ple. (For even our bodies themselves  
<sup>19.</sup>are said to be the Temples of the Ho-  
 ly Ghost.) And to dwell, a while, in the  
 contemplation, and discovery of those  
 numerous instances of most apparent,  
 ungainsayable sagacity, and providence,  
 which offer themselves to view in every  
 part and particle of this fabrick. How  
 most commodiously all things are or-  
 dered



dered in it? with how strangely cautious circumspection and foresight, not only destructive, but even (perpetually) vexatious and afflicting incongruities are avoided, and provided against? To pose our selves upon the sundry obvious questions, that might be put for the evincing of such provident foresight. As for instance, how comes it to pass that the several parts, which we find to be *double* in our bodies, are not *single* only? is this altogether by chance? That there are two eyes, ears, nostrils, hands, feet, &c. what a miserable shiftless creature had man been, if there had only been allow'd him one foot? a seeing, hearing, talking, unmoving statue? That the hand is divided into fingers? those so conveniently situate, one in so fitly opposite a posture to the rest?

And what if some one *pair*, or other, of these parts had been universally wanting? The hands, the feet, the eyes, the ears. How great a misery had it inferr'd upon mankind? and is it only a casualty that it is not so? That the back Bone is composed of so many joynts (twenty four, besides those of *that*, which is the *basis*, and sustainer of the whole) and is not all of a piece, by which stooping, or

Bartholin.  
Riolanus.

any motion of the head or neck, differs from that of the whole body, had been altogether impossible? That there is such variety and curiosity in the ways of joyning the bones together in *that*, and *other* parts of the body? That in some parts, they are joyned by meer adherence of *one*, to *another*, either *with*, or *without* an intervening medium, and both these ways, so diversly. That others are fastened together by proper joynting, so as to sute and be accompanied with motion, either more obscure, or more manifest. And this, either by a deeper, or more superficial insertion of one bone into another, or by a mutual insertion, and that so different ways. And that all these should be so exactly accommodated to the several *parts*, and *uses* to which they belong, and serve. Was all this without design? who that views the curious and apt texture of the eye, can think it was not made *on purpose* to see with, † and the ear, upon the like view, for hearing? when so many things must concur that these actions might be performed by these organs, and are found

† How foolish to think that art intended an end in making a window to see through, and that nature intended none in making an eye to see with; as *Campanella* in that rapturous discourse of his *Atheismus triumphatus*.

to

to do so? Or who can think that the sundry little engines belonging to the eye were not made with design to move it upwards, downwards, to this side, or that, or whirl it about, as there should be occasion; without which instruments, and their appendages, no such motion could have been? who, that is not stupidly perverse, can think that the sundry inward parts (which it would require a volume distinctly to speak of, and but to mention them, and their uses, would too unproportionably swell this part of this Discourse) were not made, purposely, by a designing Agent, for the ends they so aptly and constantly serve for; the want of some one among divers whereof, or but a little misplacing, or if things had been but a little otherwise than they are, had inferr'd an impossibility, that such a creature as man could have subsisted, or been propagated upon the face of the earth. As what if there had not been such a receptacle prepared as the *stomach* is, and so formed, and placed as it is, to receive and digest necessary nutriment? Had not the whole frame of man besides been in vain? Or what if the passage from it downward, had not been made somewhat, a little

Non prodest cibus  
neque corpori accedit, qui  
statim sumptus  
emittitur.  
Seneca (on another  
occasion.)

way,

way, ascending, so as to detain a convenient time, what is received, but that what was *taken in*, were suddenly *transmitted*? it is evident the whole structure had been *ruin'd* as soon as *made*. What (to instance in what seems so small a matter) if that *little cover* had been wanting at the entrance of that passage through which we breath? (the depression whereof, by the weight of what we eat or drink shuts it, and prevents meat and drink from going down that way) had not unavoidable suffocation ensued? And who can number the instances that might be given besides? Now when there is a concurrence of so many things absolutely necessary (concerning which the *common saying* is as applicable, more frequently wont to be applied to matters of morality, *Goodness is from the concurrence of all causes, evil, from any defect*) each so aptly and opportunely serving its own *proper use*, and *all, one common end*: Certainly to say that so manifold, so regular, and stated a *subserviency* to that end, and the *end it self*, were undesigned, and things casually fell out thus, is to say we know, or care not what.

We will only before we close this consideration, concerning the meer frame  
of

of an humane body (which hath been so hastily and superficially proposed, offer a supposition which is no more strange (excluding the vulgar notion by which nothing is *strange*, but what is *not common*) than the *thing it self*, as it actually is, *viz.* That the whole more external covering of the body of a man were made instead of skin, and flesh, of some very transparent substance, flexible but clear as very Crystal; thro' *which*, and the *other* more inward (and as transparent) *integuments*, or enfoldings, we could plainly perceive the *situation*, and *order* of all the *internal parts*, and how they each of them perform their distinct offices. If we could discern the continual motion of the blood, how it is conveyed, by its proper conduits, from its first source and fountain, partly downwards to the *lower intrails* (if rather it ascend not from thence, as at least, what afterwards becomes blood doth) partly upwards, to its admirable elaboratory, *the heart*: where it is refined, and furnished with fresh vital spirits, and so transmitted thence, by the *distinct vessels*, prepared for this purpose; could we perceive the curious contrivance of those little doors, by which it is let in, and out, on this  
side



side and on that ; the order and course of its circulation, its most commodious distribution, by two social chanel, or conduit-pipes that every where accompany one another throughout the body. Could we discern the curious artifice of the brain, its ways of purgation ; and were it possible to pry into the *secret chambers*, and *receptacles* of the *less*, or *more pure* spirits there ; perceive their manifold conveyances, and the rare texture of *that net* commonly call'd the *wonderful one*. Could we behold the veins, arteries, and nerves, all of them arising from their proper and distinct originals ; and their orderly dispersion for the most part, by pairs, and conjugations, on this side, and that, from the middle of the back, with the curiously wrought branches, which supposing these to appear duly diversified, as so many more dusky strokes in this transparent frame, they would be found to make throughout the whole of it ; were every smaller fibre thus made at once discernible ; especially those innumerable threds into which the spinal marrow is distributed at the bottom of the back : and could we *through the same medium*, perceive those numerous *little machines* made to serve unto voluntary

luntary motions (which in the whole body are computed by some, to the number of four hundred and thirty, or thereabouts, or so many of them as according to the present supposition could possibly come in view) and discern their composition; their various and elegant figures, round, square, long, triangular, &c. and behold them do their offices, and see how they ply to and fro, and work in their respective places, as any motion is to be performed by them. Were all these things, I say, thus made liable to an easie and distinct view; who would not admiringly cry out, *how fearfully and wonderfully am I made?* And sure there is no man sober, who would not, upon such a sight, pronounce that man mad, that should suppose such a production to have been a meer *undesigned casualty*. At least, if there be any thing in the world, that may be thought to carry *sufficiently* convincing evidences in it, of its having been made industriously, and on purpose, not by chance, would not this composition, thus offered to view, be esteemed to do so much more? Yea, and if it did only bear upon it *characters equally evidential*, of wisdom and design, with *what doth certainly* so, tho'  
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in the lowest degree, it were sufficient to evince our present purpose. For if *one* such instance, as this, would bring the matter no higher, than to a *bare equality*, that would at least argue a maker of man's body, as wise, and as properly designing as the Artificer of any such slighter piece of workmanship, that may yet, certainly, be concluded the effect of skill and design. And then, enough might be said, from *other instances*, to manifest him *unspeakably superiour*. And that the matter would be brought, at least, to an equality, upon the supposition now made there can be no doubt, if any one be judge that hath not abjur'd his understanding, and his eyes together. And what then, if we lay aside that supposition (which only somewhat gratifies fancy, and imagination) doth that alter the case? or is there the less of wisdom, and contrivance expressed in this work of forming mans body, only for that it is not so easily, and suddenly obvious to our sight? Then we might with the same reason say, concerning some curious piece of carved work, that is thought fit to be kept lock'd up in a Cabinet, when we see it, that there was admirable workmanship shewn in doing it; but as soon  
as

as it is again shut up in its repository, that there was none at all. Inasmuch as we speak of the *objective characters* of wisdom, and design, that are in the *thing it self* (though they must some way or other come under our notice, otherwise we can be capable of arguing nothing from them, yet) since we have sufficient assurance, that there really are such characters in the structure of the body of man, as have been mentioned, and a thousand more than have been thought necessary to be mentioned here: It is plain that the *greater or less facility* of finding them out; so that we be at a certainty that they are (Whether by the slower and more gradual search of our own eyes; or by relying upon the testimony of such as have purchased themselves that satisfaction by their own labour and diligence) is merely accidental to the thing it self we are discoursing of: And neither adds to, nor detracts from the *rational evidence* of the present argument. Or if it do either, the more abstruse paths of Divine Wisdom in *this* as in other things) do rather recommend it the more to our adoration and reverence, than if every thing were obvious, and lay open to the first glance of a more careless

less eye. The things which we are sure (or may be, if we do not shut our eyes) the wise Maker of this world hath done, do sufficiently serve to assure us that he could have done this also, that is, have made every thing in the frame and shape of our bodies conspicuous in the way but now supposed, if he had thought it fit. He hath done greater things. And since he hath not thought *that* fit, we may be bold to say, the doing of it, would signifie *more trifling*, and *less design*. It gives us a more amiable and comely representation of the Being we are treating of, that his works are less for *ostentation*, than *use*. And that his Wisdom and other Attributes appear in them, rather to the *instruction* of sober, than the *gratification* of vain minds.

We may therefore confidently conclude that the figuration of the humane body, carries, with it, as manifest unquestionable evidences of design, as any piece of humane artifice, that most confessedly, in the judgment of any man, doth so. And therefore, had as certainly, a designing cause. We may challenge the world to shew a *disparity*; unless it be that the advantage is unconceivably great, on our side.  
For



For would not any one that hath not abandon'd at once both his *reason*, and his *modesty*, be asham'd to confess and admire the skill that is shewn in making a *Statue*, or the *picture* of a man, that *Parker  
Tentam.  
Physico-  
Theolog.* (as one ingeniously says) is but the shadow of his skin, and deny the wisdom that appears in the compofure of *his body it self*, that contains so numerous and so various engines, and instruments, for sundry purposes in it, as that it is become *an art*, and a very laudable one, but to discover and *find out the art*, and skill, that is shewn in the contrivance and formation of them.

VIII. It is in the mean time strange to confider from how different and contrary causes it proceeds, that the wise contriver of this fabrick hath not his due acknowledgments on the account of it. For *with some*, it proceeds from their *supine and drowsie ignorance*, and that they little know, or think what prints, and foot-steps of a Deity they carry about them, in their bone and flesh, in every part and vein and limb. *With others* (as if too much learning had made them mad, or an excess of light had struck them into a moapish blindness) these things are so *well known*

known and seen, so common and obvious, that they are the less regarded. And because they can give a very punctual account *that things are so*, they think it, now, not worth the considering, *how they come to be so*. They can trace all these hidden paths and foot-steps, and therefore all seems very easie; and they give over wondring. As they that would detract from *Columbus's* acquits of glory by the discovery he had made of *America*; by pretending the atchievement was easie; whom he ingeniously rebuk'd, by challenging them to make an egg stand erect, alone, upon a plain table; which when none of them could do, he only by a gentle brushing of one end of it makes it stand on the table without other support, and then tells them this was more easie than his Voyage into *America*, now they had seen it done; before, they knew not how to go about it. Some may think the contrivance of the body of a man, or other animal, easie, now they know it; but had they been to project such a model without a *pattern*, or any thing leading thereto; how miserable a loss had they been at? How easie a confession had been drawn from them of the *finger of God*; and how silent a submission

Arch-Bishop  
Abbot's Geo-  
graph.

sion to his just triumph over their, and all humane wit! when as the most admired performances in this kind, by any mortal, have been only faint and infinitely distant imitations of the works of God. As is to be seen in the so much celebrated exploits of *Posidonius*, *Regiomontanus*, and others of this sort.

IX. And now if any should be either so incurably *blind* as not to *perceive*, or so *perversly wilful* as not to *acknowledge* an appearance of Wisdom in the frame and figuration of the body of an animal (peculiarly of man) more than equal to what appears in any the most exquisite piece of humane artifice, and which no wit of man can ever fully imitate; although as hath been said an acknowledg'd equality would suffice to evince a wise maker thereof; yet because it is the existence of God we are now speaking of; and that it is therefore not enough to *evince*, but to *magnify* the wisdom we would ascribe to him: we shall pass from the *parts and frame* to the consideration of the *more principal powers*, and *functions* of terrestrial creatures; ascending from such as agree to the less perfect orders of these,

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to those of the more perfect, *viz. of man himself*. And surely to have been the Author of faculties that shall enable to such functions, will evidence a wisdom that defies our imitation, and will dismay the attempt of it.

We begin with that of *growth*. Many sorts of rare engines we acknowledge contrived by the wit of man, but who hath ever made one that could grow? or that had in it a self-improving power? A tree, an herb, a pile of grafs may upon this account challenge all the world to make such a thing. That is to implant the power of growing into any thing to which it *doth not* natively belong, or to make a thing to which it *doth*.

By what art would they make a seed? and which way would they inspire it with a *seminal form*? And they that think this whole globe of the earth was compacted by the casual (or fatal) coalition of particles of matter, by *what magick* would they conjure so many to come together as should make one clod? we vainly hunt with a lingering mind after Miracles, if we did not more vainly mean by them nothing else but *novelties*, we are compass'd about with such. And the greatest miracle is, that  
we

we see them not. You with whom the daily productions of nature (as you call it) are so cheap, see if you can do the like. Try your skill upon a Rose. Yea, but you must have pre-existent matter? But can you ever prove the Maker of the world had so? or even defend the possibility of uncreated matter? And suppose they had the free grant of all the matter between the crown of their head and the Moon, could they tell what to do with it? or how to manage it, so as to make it yield them one single flower, that they might glory in, as their own production?

And what mortal man, that hath reason enough about him to be serious, and to think a while, would not even be amaz'd at the Miracle of *Nutrition*? or that there are things in the world capable of *nourishment*, or who would attempt an imitation here? or not despair to perform any thing like it. That is to make any nourishable thing? Are we not here infinitely out-done? Do not we see our selves compass'd about with wonders, and are we not our selves such, in that we *see*, and *are* creatures, from all whose parts there is a continual defluxion, and yet that receive a constant gradual supply, and re-



novation, by which they are continued in the same state ! As the Bush burning, but not consumed. 'Tis easie to give an artificial frame to a thing that shall gradually *decay*, and *wast*, till it quite be gone, and disappear. You can raise a structure of Snow, that would soon do that. But can your manual skill compose a thing, that *like our bodies*, shall be continually *melting away*, and be *continually repaired*, through so long a tract of time ? Nay, but you can tell how it is done, you know in what method, and by what instruments food is received, concocted, separated, and so much as must serve for nourishment, turned into chyle, and that into bloud, first grosser, and then more refined, and that distributed into all parts for this purpose. Yea, and what then ? therefore you are as wise as your Maker ? could you have made such a thing as the stomach, a liver, an heart, a vein, an artery ? or are you so very sure, what the digestive quality is ? or if you are, and know what things best serve to maintain, to repair, or strengthen it, who implanted that quality ? both where it is so immediately useful, or in the other things you would use for the service of that ? or how, if such things had  
had

had not been prepared to your hand, would you have devised to perswade the particles of matter into so useful and happy a conjuncture, as that such a quality might result? or (to speak more suitably to the most) How, if you had not been shewn the way, would you have thought it were to be done, or which way would you have gone to work, to turn *meat* and *drink*, into *flesh* and *bloud*?

Nor is *propagation* of their own kind, by the creatures that have that faculty implanted in them, less admirable, or more possible to be imitated by any humane device. Such productions stay in their first descent. Who can, by his own contrivance, find out a way, of making any thing, that can produce *another like it self*. What machine did ever man invent, that had *this power*? And the ways and means, by which it is done, are such (though he that can do all things well knew how to compass his ends by them) as do exceed not our understanding only, but our wonder.

And what shall we say of *spontaneous motion* wherewith we find also creatures endowed that are so mean and despicable in our eyes (as well as our selves)

that is, that so silly a thing as a fly, a gnat, &c, should have a power in it to move it self, or stop its own motion, at its own pleasure ! How far have all attempted imitations in this kind fallen short of this perfection ? and how much more excellent a thing is the smallest and most contemptible insect, than the most admired machine we ever heard or read of (as *Archytas Tarentinus* his Dove so anciently celebrated, or more lately *Regiomontanus* his Fly, or his Eagle, or any the like.) Not only as having this *peculiar power*, above any thing of this sort, but as having the *sundry other powers*, besides, meeting in it, whereof these are wholly destitute.

And should we go on to instance further in the *several powers of sensation*, both external and internal, the various instincts, appetitions, passions, sympathies, antipathies, the *powers of memory*, and (we might add of *speech*.) that we find the inferiour orders of creatures, either generally furnish'd with, or some of them, as to this last, dispos'd unto. How should we even over-do the present business ? and too needlessly insult over humane wit (which we must suppose to have already yielded the cause) in challenging it to produce, and offer  
to

to view, an *hearing seeing-engine*, that can *imagine, talk*, is capable of *hunger, thirst, of desire, anger, fear, grief, &c.* as its *own creature*, concerning which it may glory and say, I have done this?

Is it so admirable a performance, and so ungainfayable an evidence of skill and wisdom, with much labour and long travail of mind, a busie, restless, agitation of working thoughts, the often renewal of frustrated attempts, the varying of defeated trials; this way and that, at length to hit upon, and by much pains, and with a slow gradual progress, by the use of who can tell how many sundry sorts of instruments or tools, managed by more (possibly) than a few hands, by long hewing, hammering, turning, filing to compose one only single machine of such a frame, and structure, as that by the frequent reinforcement of a skilful hand, it may be capable of some (and that, otherwise, but a very short liv'd) motion: And is it no argument, or effect of wisdom, so *easily, and certainly*, without *labour, error, or disappointment*, to frame, both so infinite a variety of *kinds*; and so innumerable *individuals* of every *such kind* of living creatures, that cannot only,

with the greatest facility, move themselves, with so many sorts of motion, *downwards, upwards*, to and fro, this way or that, with a progressive, or circular, a swifter, or a slower motion, at their own pleasure; but can also grow, propagate, see, hear, desire, joy, &c. Is this no work of wisdom, but only blind, either, *fate*, or *chance*? of how strangely perverse, and odd a complexion is that understanding (if yet it may be called an understanding) that can make this judgment!

X. And they think they have found out a rare knack, and that gives a great relief to their diseased minds, who have learn'd to call the bodies of living creatures (even the humane not excepted) by way of diminution, *machines* or a sort of *automatous Engines*.

But how little cause there is to hug, or be fond of, this fanſie, would plainly appear.

If *first*, we would allow our selves leisure to examine, *with how small pretence*, this *appellation* is so placed, and applied. And *next*, if it be applied rightly, to how little purpose it is alledg'd; or that it signifies nothing to the exclusion of *divine wisdom*, from the formation of them. And



And for the first, because we know not a better, let it be considered how *D. Cartes* defective, and unsatisfying the account *de passionibus animæ.* is, which the great and (justly admired) master in this faculty, gives, how *part. 1. atque alibi.* divers of those things, which he would have to be so, are performed only in the mechanical way.

For though his ingenuity must be acknowledged, in his modest exception of some nobler operations, belonging to our selves, from coming under those rigid, necessitating laws; yet certainly, to the severe enquiry, of one not partially addicted to the sentiments of so great a wit, because they were his, it would appear there are great defects, and many things yet wanting, in the account which is given us, of some of the meaner of those functions, which he would attribute only to *organiz'd matter*, or (to use his own expression) to the *conformation of the members of the body*, and the *course of the spirits*, excited by the *heat of the heart*, &c.

For howsoever accurately he describes the instruments and the way, his account seems very little satisfying of the principle, either of *spontaneous motion*, or of *sensation*.

As

As to the *former*, though it be very apparent that the muscles, seated in that opposite posture wherein they are, mostly found paired, throughout the body, the nerves, and the animal spirits in the brain, and (suppose we) that *glandule* seated in the inmost part of it, are the *instruments* of the motion of the Limbs and the whole body; yet, what are all these to the *prime causation*, or *much more*, to the *spontaneity* of *this motion*? And whereas, with us, (who are acknowledged to have such a faculty independent on the body) an *act of will* doth so manifestly contribute; so that, *when we will*, our body is moved with so admirable facility, and we feel not the cumbersome weight of an arm to be lift up, or of our *whole corporeal bulk*, to be moved this way, or that, by a slower, or swifter motion. Yea, and when as also, *if we will*, we can, on the sudden, in a very instant, start up, out of the most composed, sedentary posture, and put our selves, upon occasion, into the most violent course of motion, or action. But, *if we have no such will*, though we have the same *agil spirits* about us, we find no difficulty, to keep in a posture of rest; and are, for the most part, not sensible of any *endeavour*  
or

or *urgency* of those active particles, as if they were hardly to be restrained from putting us into motion; and against a *reluctant act* of our will, we are not moved but with great difficulty *to them*, that will give *themselves*, and *us*, the trouble. This being, I say, the case *with us*; and it being also obvious to our observation, that it is *so very much alike*, in these mentioned respects, with *brute creatures*, how unconceivable is it, that the *directive principle* of *their motions*, and *ours*, should be so *vastly*, and *altogether unlike*? (whatsoever greater perfection is required, with us, as to those more noble, and perfect functions, and operations which are found to belong to us.) That is, that *in us*, an *act of will* should signify so very much, and be, for the most part, *necessary* to the beginning, the continuing, the stopping, or the varying of our motions, and *in them*, nothing *like it*, nor anything else besides only that corporal principle, which he assigns as *common to them and us*, the continual heat in the heart (which he calls a sort of fire) nourished by the blood of the veins; the instruments of motion, already mention'd, and the various representations and impressions of *external objects*, as *there and*  
else.

De Passione  
part. 1.  
art. 8.

Princip.  
Philosoph.  
Diotric.  
c. 4. Dis-  
sertat. de  
method.

*elsewhere*, he expresses himself! upon which last (though much is undoubtedly to be attributed to it) that so *main a stress*, should be laid, as to the diversifying of motion, seems strange; when we may observe so various motions of some silly creatures, as of a *fly*, in our window, while we cannot perceive, and can scarce imagine, any change in external objects about them: yea, a swarm of flies, so variously frisking, and plying to and fro, some, *this way*, others, *that*; with a thousand diversities, and interferences in their motion: and some resting; while things are in the same state, externally, to them all. So that what should *cause*, or *cease*, or so *strangely vary* such motions, is, *from thence*, or any thing else he hath said, left unimaginable. As it is *much more*, how, in creatures of much strength, as a *Bear* or a *Lion*, a paw, should be moved sometimes, so gently, and sometimes with so mighty force, only by *meer mechanism*, without any *directive principle*, that is not altogether corporal. But most of all how the *strange regularity* of motion, in some creatures, as of the Spider in making its web, and the like, should be owing to *no other*, than *such causes* as he hath assigned of the motions, in general, of brute creatures.

And

And what though *some motions* of our own, seem wholly involuntary (as *that* of our eye-lids, in the case which he supposes) doth it therefore follow they must proceed from a principle only corporal? as if our soul had no other act belonging to it, but that of *willing*? which he doth not down-right say; but that it is its *only*, or its *chief act*; and if it be its *chief act* only, what hinders but that *such a motion* may proceed from an act, *that is not chief*? or that it may have a *power*, that may, sometimes, step forth into act (and in greater matters than that) without any formal, deliberated, command, or direction of our will. So little reason is there to conclude, that all our motions *common to us*, with beasts, or even *their motions themselves*, depend on nothing else, *than the conformation of the members, and the course which the spirits, excited by the heat of the heart, do naturally follow, in the brain, the nerves, and the muscles*, after the same manner with the motion of an *automaton*, &c.

As art. 15.

But as to the matter of *sensation*, his account seems much more defective, and unintelligible, *that is*, how it should be performed (as he supposes every thing common to us with beasts may be) *with-*

out



*out a soul.* For, admit that it be (as who doubts but it is) *by* the instruments which he assigns, we are still to seek what is the *sentient*, or *what useth* these instruments, and doth *sentire*, or exercise sense by them? *That is*, suppose it be performed in the *brain*, and that (as he says) by the help of the *nerves*, which from thence, like small strings, are stretcht forth unto all the other members; suppose we have the *three things* to consider in the *nerves*, which he recites; Their *interiour substance*, which extends it self like very slender threds from the brain to the extremities of all the other members into which they are knit. The very *thin little skins*, which inclose these, and which being continued, with those that inwrap the brain, do compose the *little pipes* which contain *these threds*; and *lastly*, the *animal spirits*, which are convey'd down from the brain through these pipes. Yet which of these is most subservient unto *sense*? *That* he undertakes elsewhere to declare, *viz.* that we are not to think (which we also suppose) *some* nerves to serve *for sense*, *others* for *motion* only, as some have thought, but that the inclosed spirits serve for the motion of the members, and those little threds (also

Princip.  
Philosoph.  
Sect. 189.

De Passio.  
art. 11.

Dioptr. c.  
4. S. 4, 5.

(also inclosed) for sense. Are we yet any nearer our purpose? Do these small threds *sentire*? are these the things that ultimately receive, and discern, the various impressions of objects? And since they are all of *one sort of substance*, how comes it to pass that some of them are *seeing* threds, others *hearing* threds, others *tasting*, &c. Is it from the divers and commodious figuration of the organs unto which these descend from the brain? But though we acknowledge, and admire, the curious, and exquisite, formation of *those organs*, and their most *apt usefulness* (as *organs* or *instruments*) to the purposes for which they are designed; yet what do they signify without a proportionably *apt*, and *able Agent* to use them, or *Percipient* to entertain and judge of the several notices, which by them are only *transmitted* from *external things*? That is, suppose we a drop of never so pure and transparent liquor, or let there be *three*, diversly tinctured, or coloured, and (lest they mingle) kept asunder by their distinct, infolding coats, let these encompass one the other and, together, compose one little shining globe: are we satisfied that now this curious pretty ball can see? nay, suppose we it never

ver so conveniently situate, suppose we the forementioned strings fastned to it, and these, being hollow, well replenisht with as pure air, or wind, or gentle flame as you can imagine; yea, and all the before described little threds to boot, can it yet do the feat? nay, suppose we all things else to concur, that we can suppose, except a *living principle* (call that by what name you will) and is it not still as incapable of the act of *seeing*, as a ball of clay, or a pebble stone? or can the substance of the brain it self perform *that* or *any other* act of *sense*. (For it is superfluous to speak distinctly of the rest) any more than the pulp of an apple, or a dish of curds? So that, trace this matter whether you will, within the compass of your assigned limits, and you are still at the same loss, range through the whole body, and what can you find but flesh, and bones, marrow, and bloud, strings and threds, humour and vapour; and which of these is *capable of sense*? These are your materials and such like, order them as you will, put them into what method you can devise, and except you can make it *live*, you cannot make it so much as *feel*, much less perform all other acts of sense besides, un-  
to

to which, these tools alone, seem as unproportionable, as a plough-share to the most curious sculpture, or a pair of tongs to the most melodious music.

But how much more unconceivable it is that the figuration, and concurrence, of the foremention'd organs, can alone, suffice to produce the several passions of *love, fear, anger, &c.* whereof we find so evident indications in brute creatures, it is enough but to hint. And (but that all persons do not read the same Books) it were altogether unnecessary to have said so much; after so plain demonstration already extant, that *matter*, howsoever modified, *any of the mention'd ways*, is incapable of *sense*.

In Doctor  
More's  
Immortal-  
ity of the  
Soul.

Nor would it seem necessary to attempt any thing in this kind, in particular and direct opposition to the very peculiar sentiments of this most ingenious Author (as he will undoubtedly be reckon'd in all succeeding time) who when he undertakes to shew what *sense* is and how it is performed, makes it the proper business of the Soul, comprehends it under the name of *Cogitation*; naming himself a *thinking thing*, adds by way of question, what is that? and answers, a thing *doubting; understand-*

Princip.  
Phil. part.  
4. 189.

I

ing,

Medit. 2.

Diaptr.  
c. 4.

ing, affirming, denying, willing, nilling, and also imagining, and exercising sense, says expressly it is evident to all, that it is the *Soul*, that *exercises sense*, not the *body*, in as direct words as the so much celebrated Poet of old. The only wonder is, that under this general name of *Cogitation* he denies it unto *Brutes*; under *which name*, he may be thought *less fitly* to have included it, than to have affirmed them uncapable of any thing, to which *that name* ought to be applied; as he doth not only affirm, but esteems himself, by most firm reasons, to have proved\*.

\* Resp.  
sectæ.  
Dissert.  
De Method.  
c. 5.

And yet that particular reason seems a great deal more *pious*, than it is *cogent*; which he gives for his *choosing* this particular way of differencing *brutes*, from *humane creatures*, viz. least any prejudice should be done to the doctrine of the *humane souls immortality*: There being nothing, as he *truly* says, *that doth more easily turn off weak minds, from the path of virtue; than if they should think the souls of brutes, to be of the same nature with our own; and therefore that nothing remains to be hoped, or feared, after this life, more by us, than by flies or pismires*. For, sure there were other ways of providing against *that danger*; besides



besides that of denying them so much as sense (other than meerly *organical*, *Respecta.* as he somewhere alleviates the harshness of that position, but without telling us *what useth* these organs) and the making them nothing else, but *well formed machines*.

But yet if we should admit the propriety of this appellation, and acknowledge (the thing it self intended to be signified by it) that all the powers belonging to meer brutal nature are purely mechanical, and no more ; To what purpose is it here alledg'd? or what can it be understood to signifie? what is lost from our cause by it ? And what have Atheists whereof to glory? For was the contrivance of these *machines theirs* ? were they the Authors of this rare invention, or of any thing like it? or can they shew any product of humane device, and wit, that shall be capable of vying with the *strange powers* of those *machines* ? or can they imagine what so highly exceeds all *humane skill*, to have fallen *by chance*, and without any contrivance or design at all, into a frame capable of such powers and operations?

If they be *machines*, they are (as that free-spirited Author speaks) to be considered

Dissert. de  
Method.  
Sect. 5.

sidered *as a sort of machine* made by the hand of God, which is by infinite degrees better ordered, and hath in it more admirable motions, than any that could ever have been formed by the art of man. Yea, and we might add, so little disadvantage would accrue to the *present cause* (what ever might to *some other*) by this concession, that rather (if it were not a wrong to *the cause*, which justly disdains we should alledge any thing *false*, or *uncertain* for its support) this would add much, we will not say to its *victory*, but to its *triumph*, that we did acknowledge them nothing else than meer mechanical contrivances. For, since they must certainly either *be such*, or have each of them a *soul* to animate, and inable them to their several functions; it seems a much more easie performance, and is more conceivable, and within the nearer reach of humane apprehension, that they should be furnish'd *with such a one*, than be made capable of so admirable operations *without it*; and the *former* (though it were not a *surer*) were a more amazing, unsearchable, and less comprehensible discovery of the most transcendent wisdom, than the *latter*.

XI. But

XI. But because whatsoever comes under the name of *cogitation* properly taken, is assigned to some higher cause, than mechanism; and that there are operations belonging to man, which lay claim to a *reasonable Soul*, as the immediate *principle*, and *author* of them; we have yet this further step to advance; that is to consider the most apparent evidence we have of a *wise designing Agent*, in the powers, and nature, of *this more excellent*, and (among things more obvious to our notice) the *noblest of his productions*.

And were it not for the slothful neglect of the most *to study themselves*; we should not here need to recount, *unto men*, the common, and well-known *abilities*, and *excellencies*, which peculiarly belong to *their own nature*; They might take notice without being told, that *first*, as to their *intellectual faculty*, they have somewhat about them, that can think, understand, frame notions of things, that can rectify, or supply, the false, or defective representations, which are made to them by their external senses, and fancies; that can conceive of things far above the reach and sphere of sense, the *moral good*, or *evil*

of actions or inclinations, what there is in them of *rectitude*, or *pravity*; whereby they can animadvert, and cast their eye *inward* upon themselves. Observe the good, or evil, acts or inclinations, the knowledge, ignorance, dulness, vigour, tranquility, trouble, and generally, the perfections, or imperfections, of their own minds. That can apprehend the *general natures* of things, the *future existence* of what, yet, is not, with the *future appearance* of that, *to us*, which, as yet, appears not.

Hobbs's  
Humane  
Nature.

Of which *last sort of power*, the confident assertion *no man can have a conception of the future*, needs not, against our experience, make us doubt; especially being inforced by no better, than that *pleasant reason* there subjoyned, *for, the future is not yet*; that is to say, *because it is future*; and so (which is all this reason amounts to) *we cannot conceive it, because we cannot*. For though our conceptions of *former things*, guide us in forming notions of *what is future*, yet sure our conception of any thing *as future*, is much another sort of conception, from what we have of the same thing *as past*, as appears from its different effects; for if an object be apprehended good, we conceive

conceive of it *as past* with sorrow, *as future* with hope and joy. If evil, with joy *as past*, with fear and sorrow, *as future*.

And (which above all the rest discovers and magnifies the intellectual power of the humane soul) that they can form a conception (howsoever imperfect) of *this absolutely perfect Being*, whereof we are discoursing. Which even they that acknowledge not its existence, cannot deny; except they will profess themselves blindly, and at a venture, to deny they know not what? or what they have not so much as thought of?

They may take notice of *their power of comparing things*, of discerning and making a judgment of their *agreements*, and *disagreements*, their *proportions*, and *disproportions* to one another. Of *affirming*, or *denying*, this, or that, concerning such, or such things; and of pronouncing with more, or less confidence, concerning the *truth* or *falsehood* of such affirmations or negations.

And moreover of their *power of arguing*, and inferring one thing from another, so as from one plain, and evident principle, to draw forth a long chain



chain of consequences, that may be discerned to be linked therewith.

They have withal to consider the *liberty* and the *large capacity* of the *humane will*; which, when it is its self, rejects the *dominion* of any other, than the *supreme Lord*; and refuses *satisfaction* in any other, than the *supreme* and most comprehensive, *good*.

And upon, even, so hasty, and transient a view, of a *thing furnished with such powers and faculties*; we have sufficient occasion to bethink our selves; *How came such a thing as this, into being?* whence did it spring, or to what original doth it owe it self.

More particularly we have here two things to be discoursed:

First, that *notwithstanding so high excellencies*, the *soul* of man doth yet appear to be a *caused being*, that sometime had a beginning.

Secondly; That *by them*, it is sufficiently evident, that it owes it self to a *wise, and intelligent cause*.

*As to the former of these*, we need say the less, because that sort of Atheists with whom we have chiefly now to do, deny not humane souls to have had

had a beginning, as supposing them to be produced by the bodies they animate by the same generation, and that such generation did sometimes begin. That only rude and wildly moving matter was from eternity, and that by infinite alterations, and commixtures, in that eternity, it fell at last into this orderly frame and state, wherein things now are; and became prolifick, so as to give beginning to the several sorts of living things, which do now continue to propagate themselves. The mad folly of which random fancy we have been so largely contending against hitherto. The *other sort* who were for an eternal succession of generations, have been sufficiently refuted by divers others, and partly by what hath been already said in this discourse; and we may further meet with them ere it be long. We, in the meantime find not any professing Atheism, to make humane souls, as such *necessary* and *self-originate* beings.

Yet it is requisite to consider not only what persons of Atheistical persuasions *have said*, but what also they possibly, *may say*. And moreover; *some*, that have been remote from Atheism, have been prone, upon the contemplation of the excellencies of the humane  
soul,

soul, to over-magnifie, yea and even no less, than deifie it. 'Tis therefore needful to say somewhat in this matter. For if nothing of *direct, and down-right Atheism* had been designed, The *rash hyperboles* (as we will charitably call them) and unwarantable rhetorickions of *these latter*, should they obtain to be lookt upon and received, as severe, and strict assertions of Truth, were equally destructive of Religion, *as the others* more strangely bold, and avowed opposition to it.

Sen. Ep. 92.

Hor. Serm.

M. Anton.

αἰσῶμα

μὲν ἐαυτοῦ

The Pythagoreans concerning whom it is said they were wont to admonish one ano-

Such, I mean, as have spoken of the *Souls of men, as parts of God, one thing with him; a particle of Divine breath; an extract, or derivation of himself.* That have not feared to apply to them his most peculiar attributes, or say *that* of them, which is most *appropriate*, and incommunicably belonging to *him alone.* Nay, to give them his very name, and say in plain words they were God.

to take heed lest they should rent God in themselves. Μὴ διασπῆν τὸν, ἐν ἑαυτοῖς, θεόν. *Jamblich. de vit. Pythag. Plato,* who undertakes to prove the immortality of the Soul by such arguments as, if they did conclude any thing, would conclude it to be God. That it is the fountain, the principle [πρῶτη, καὶ ἀρχὴ] of motion; and adds that the principle is unbegotten, &c. in *Phaedro.* Makes it the cause of all things, and the ruler of all, *De Leg. l. 10.* though his words there seem meant of the Soul of the world. Concerning *which soul*, afterwards, enquiring whether all ought not to account it God? He answers, Yes certainly, except any one be come to extreme madness. And whether

an identity were not imagined of *our souls*, with *that* of the world, or with God, is too much left in doubt; both as to him, and some of his followers. To say nothing of modern Enthusiasts.

Now it would render *a Temple* alike insignificant, to suppose *no worshipper*, as to suppose *none who should be worshipped*. And what should be the worshipper, when *our souls* are thought the *same thing* with what should be the object of our worship?

But methinks, when we consider their necessitous, indigent state, their wants and cravings, their pressures, and groans, their grievances and complaints, we should find enough to convince us they are not the *self-originate* or *self-sufficient being*. And might even despair any thing should be plain and easie to them, with whom it is a difficulty to distinguish *themselves* from God. Why are they in a state which they dislike? wherefore are they not full and satisfied? why do they wish, and complain, is this God-like? But if any have a doubt hanging in their minds, concerning the *unity of souls*, with one another, or with the soul of the world, let them read what is already extant. And supposing them thereupon, distinct Beings; there needs no more to prove them not to be necessary,

Dr. More's  
Poem. An-  
timonopu-  
chia.  
His Im-  
mortality  
of the Soul.  
Mr. Bax-  
ters Ap-  
pendix to  
the Reasons  
of Christi-  
an Religi-  
on, &c.

necessary, independent, uncaused ones, than their subjection to so frequent changes; their ignorance, doubts, irresolution, and gradual progress to knowledge, certainty, and stability in their purposes; their very being united with these bodies in which they have been but a little while, as we all know; whereby they undergo no *small change* (admitting them, to have been, pre-existent) and wherein they experience *so many*. Yea, whether those changes import any immutation of their very essence or no; the repugnancy being so plainly manifest of the very terms *necessary* and *changeable*. And inasmuch as it is so evident that a necessary being can receive no accession to it self; that it must always have, or keep it self, after the same manner, and in the same state; that if it be necessarily *such*, or *such*, (as we cannot conceive it to be, but we must, in our own thoughts, affix to it some *determinate state* or other) it must be eternally such, and ever in that particular unchanged state.

Therefore be the perfection of our souls as great, as our most certain knowledge of them can possibly allow us to suppose it, 'tis not yet *so great*, but that we must be constrained to confess them

no



no necessary self originate Beings, and by consequence, dependent ones, that owe themselves to *some cause*.

XII. Nor yet (that we may pass over to the other strangely distant extreme) is the perfection of our souls *so little*, as to require less than an *intelligent cause*, endow'd with the wisdom which we assert, and challenge, unto the truly necessary, uncaused Being.

*Which*, because he hath no other rival, or competitor, for the glory of this production, than only *the fortuitous jumble of the blindly moving particles of matter*; directs our enquiry to this single point, *whose image* the thing produced bears? or *which* it more resembles, *stupid, senseless, unactive matter* (or at the best only *supposed moving*, though no man, upon the Atheists terms can imagine how it came to be so) or the *active intelligent Being*, whom we affirm the *cause of all things*, and who hath peculiarly entituled himself, the *Father of Spirits*.

That is we are to consider whether the powers and operations belonging to the *Reasonable Soul* do not plainly argue,

1. That

1. That it neither *rises from*, nor is *meer matter*; whence it will be consequent, it must have an *efficient, divers from matter*?

2. That it owes it self to an *intelligent Efficient*.

As to the *former*, we need not deal distinctly and severally concerning their *original* and their *nature*. For if they are not *meer matter*, it will be evident enough they do not *arise from thence*.

So that all will be fumm'd up in this enquiry, *whether Reason can agree to matter considered alone or by its self*?

But here the case requires closer Discourse. For in order to *this inquiry* 'tis requisite the *subject* be determined, we inquire about.

It hath been commonly taken for granted that *all substance* is either *matter*, or *mind*. When yet it hath not been agreed what is the *distinct notion*, of the *one*, or the *other*. And for the stating *their difference*, there is herein both an apparent *difficulty*, and *necessity*.

*A difficulty*; For the *ancient difference*, that the *former* is *extended*, having *parts lying without each other*; the *latter unextended*, having *no parts*; is now commonly exploded, and, as it seems,  
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reasonably enough; Both because we scarce know how to impose it upon our selves, to conceive of a *mind* or *Spirit*, that is *unextended*, or that *hath no parts*; and that, *on the other hand*, the *atoms of matter*, strictly taken, must also be *unextended*, and be *without parts*.

And the difficulty of assigning the proper *difference* between *these two*, is further evident from what we experience how difficult it is to form any clear distinct notion of *substance it self* (so to be divided into *matter* and *mind*) stript of all its *Attributes* †. Tho', as that celebrated *Author* also speaks, we can be surer of nothing, than that there is a *real somewhat*, that sustains those *Attributes*.

† As is to be seen in that accurate Discourse of *Mr. Lock*, his Essay of Humane Understanding published since this was first written.

Yet also, who sees not a *necessity*, of assigning a difference? For how absurd is it, to affirm, deny, or enquire, of what belongs, or belongs not to *matter*, or *mind*, if it be altogether unagreed, what we mean by the *one*, or the *other*.

That the *former*, speaking of any *continued portion of matter*, hath parts *actually separable*; The *other* being admitted to *have parts too*, but that *cannot be actually separated*; with the power of *self-contraction*, and *self-dilatation*, ascrib'd to this *latter*, deny'd of the *former*

*mer*, seem as intelligible differences, and as little liable to exception, as any we can think of. Besides what we observe of dullness, inactivity, insensibility, *in one sort of substance*; and of vigor, activity, capacity of sensation, and spontaneous motion, with what we can conceive of *self-vitality*, in this latter sort, i. e. that whereas *matter* is only capable of *having life imparted* to it, from somewhat that *lives of it self*, created *mind or spirit*, though depending for *its being* on the Supreme cause hath *life essentially* included in *that being*, so that it is *inseparable from it*, and it is the same thing to it, *to live*, and *to be*. But a meerly *Materiate Being*, if it live, borrows its life, as a thing foreign to it, and separable from it.

But if instead of such distinction we should shortly and at the next, have pronounced, that as *mind* is a *cogitant substance*, *matter* is *incogitant*; How would this have squared with our present enquiry? What Antagonist would have agreed with us upon *this* state of the *question*? i. e. in effect, whether *that* can *reason or think*, *that is incapable of reason or thought*? such, indeed, as have studied more to *hide a bad meaning*, than *express a good*, have confounded the terms *matter*,

*ter* or *body*, and *substance*. But take we *matter* as contradistinguisht to *mind* and *spirit*, as above described : and it is concerning *this* that we intend this enquiry.

And here we shall therefore wave the consideration of *their* conceits, concerning the manner of the first origination of *men*, who thought their whole being was only a *production* of the earth. Whereof the *Philosophical* account deserves as much laughter, instead of confutation, as any the most fabulously *Poetical*. That is, how they were formed (as also the other animals) in certain little bags, or wombs of the earth, out of which, when they grew ripe, they broke forth, \* &c.

\* Gassend.  
Epicur.  
Syntag.

And only consider what is said of the constitution and nature of the humane soul *it self*. Which is said to be compos'd of very well polish'd, † the *smoothest* and the *roundest* atoms; and which are of the neatest fashion, and every way, you must suppose, the best condition'd the whole Country could afford; of a more excellent *make*, as there is added, than those of the *fire* it self. And these are the things you must know, which think, study, contemplate, frame syllogisms, make Theorems, lay plots, contrive business, act the Philosopher, the Lo-

† As may be seen in the same Syntag. and in Epicurus's Epist. to Herodot. in Lact. ΕΞ ἀτόμων ἀνθρώπων συγκείμενα, λέει οἱ ἄνθρωποι, ἡσυχάζοντες, &c.



gician, the Mathematician, Statesman, and every thing else (only you may except the priest, for of him there was no need.)

This therefore is our present *theme*, whether such things as these be capable of *such*, or *any* acts of reason, yea or no?

And if such a subject may admit of serious discourse; in this way it may be convenient to proceed, *viz.* either any such small particle, or atom (for our business is not now with *Des Cartes* but *Epicurus*) *alone*, is rational, or a good convenient number of them assembled, and most happily *met together*. It is much to be feared the former way will not do. For we have nothing to consider in any of these atoms, in its solitary condition, besides its magnitude, its figure, and its weight, and you may add also its motion (if you could devise how it should come by it.)

And now, because it is not to be thought that *all atoms* are *rational*, for then the stump of a tree, or a bundle of straw might serve to make a soul of, for ought we know, as good as the best) it is to be considered by which of those properties, an atom shall be entituled to the privilege of being rational, and the

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the rational atoms be distinguished from the rest. Is it their peculiar magnitude, or size that so far ennobles them? *Epicurus* would here have us believe, that the *least* are the fittest for this turn. Now if you consider how little we must suppose them generally to be, according to his account of them; That is that looking upon any of those little motes a stream whereof you may perceive when the Sun shines in at a window, and he doubts not but many Myriads of even ordinary atoms, go to the composition of any one of these scarcely discernable motes; how sportful a contemplation were it, to suppose one of those furnished with all the powers of a reasonable soul (though it's likely they would not laugh at the jest, that think thousands of souls might be conveniently plac'd upon the point of a needle.) And yet, which makes the matter more admirable, that very few, except they they be very carefully pickt and chosen, can be found among those many myriads, but will be *too big* to be capable of rationality. Here sure the fate is very hard, of those that come nearest the size, but only, by a very little too much corpulency, happen to be excluded, as unworthy to be counted among the rati-

onal atoms. But sure if all sober reason be not utterly lost and squandered away among these little entities, it must needs be judged altogether incomprehensible, why, if, upon the account of meer littleness, any atom should be capable of reason, all should not be so. (And then we could not but have a very rational world.) At least, the difference, in this point, being so very small among them; and they being all so very little, methinks they should all be capable of *some reason*, and have only less or more of it, according as they are bigger and less. But there is little doubt that single property, of *less magnitude*, will not be stood upon as the characteristical difference of rational, and irrational. Atoms; and because their more or less gravity is reckon'd necessarily and so immediately to depend on that (for those Atoms cannot be thought porous, but

\* Where yet it falls out somewhat crossly that

very closely compacted each one within it self) this, it is likely, will as little be depended on \*. And so their peculi- the least (and consequently the lightest) should be thought fitter to be the matter of the rational soul, because they are aptest for motion, when yet no other cause is assigned of their motion besides their gravity, which cannot but be more as they are bigger (for no doubt if you should try them in a pair of scales, the biggest would be found to out-weigh) whence also it should seem to follow, that the heaviest having most in them of that which is the cause of motion, should be the most moveable, and so by consequence the biggest.

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ar figure must be the more trusted to, as the differencing thing. And because there is in this respect so great a variety among this little sort of People, or *Nation* as this Author somewhere calls them, whereof he gives so punctual an account, † as if he had been the *Generalissimo* of all their Armies, and were wont to view them at their Rendzevous, to form them into Regiments and squadrons, and appoint them to the distinct services he found them aptest for. No doubt it was a difficulty to determine which sort of figure was to be pitcht on to make up the rational regiment. But since his power was absolute, and there was none to gain-say or contradict, the round figure was judged best and most deserving this honour. Otherwise a reason might have been asked (and it might have been a greater difficulty to have given a good one) why some other figure might not have done as well; unless respect were had to fellow-Atoms, and that it was thought, they of this figure could better associate for the present purpose; and *that* we shall consider of by and by; we now proceed on the supposition that, possibly a single Atom by the advantage of this figure, might be judg'd capable of

† That they are round, oblong, oval, plain, hooked, rough, smooth, bunch-back'd, &c.

this high atchievement. And in that case, it would not be impertinent to enquire, whether if an Atom were perfectly round, and so, very rational ; but by an unexpected misadventure, it comes to have one little corner somewhere clapt on, it be hereby quite spoil'd of its rationality ? And again, whether one that comes somewhat near that figure, only it hath some little protuberancies upon it, might not by a little filing, or the friendly rubs of other Atoms become rational ? And yet, now we think on't, of this improvement he leaves no hope, because he tells us, though they have parts, yet they are so solidly compacted that they are by no force capable of dissolution. And so whatever their fate is in this particular, they must abide it without expectation of change. And yet, though we cannot *really* alter it for the better with any of them, yet we may *think* as favourably of the matter as we please ; and for any thing that yet appears, whatever peculiar claim the round ones lay to rationality, we may judge as well (and shall not easily be disprov'd) of any of the rest.

Upon the whole, no one of *these properties, alone*, is likely to make a *rational Atom*: what they *will all do*, meeting



ing together, may yet seem a doubt. That is, supposing we could hit upon one single Atom, that is at once of a very little size, and consequently very light and nimble, and most perfectly smooth, and unexceptionably round (and possibly there may be found a good many such) will not this do the business? May we not now hope to have a rational sort of people among them, that is, those of this peculiar family, or tribe? And yet still the matter will be found to go very hard; for if we cannot imagine or devise how any one of *these properties* should contribute *any thing* (as upon our utmost disquisition we certainly cannot) towards the power of reasoning, it is left us altogether unimaginable how *all these properties together* should make a rational atom! There is only one relief remaining, that is, what if we add to these *other properties* some peculiarly-brisk sort of actual motion: For to be barely *moveable* will not serve, inasmuch as all are so; But will not *actual motion* (added to its being irreprehensibly, little, light, and round) especially if it be a very freakish one, and made up of many odd, unexpected windings, and turns, effect the business? Possibly it might do some-

thing to *actual reasoning*, supposing the power were there before ; for who can tell but the little thing, was fallen asleep, and by this means its power might be awaken'd into some exercise ? But that it should *give the power it self*, is above all comprehension. And there is nothing else to give it. These that have been mentioned, being all the prime qualities that are assigned to Atoms singly considered. All other that can be supposed, belonging to concrete bodies, that are composed of many of them meeting together.

And therefore hither in the next place our enquiry must be directed, whether any number of Atoms (definite or indefinite) being in themselves severally, *irrational*, can become *rational* by *association*, or compose, and make up a rational soul ?

Hitherto it must be acknowledg'd we have not fought with any adversary ; not having met with any that have asserted the *rationality of single, corporeal Atoms* ; yet because we know not what time may produce, and whither the distress, and exigency of a desperate cause, may drive the maintainers of it ; 'twas not therefore fit to say nothing to that (supposable or possible) assertion ( I mean

mean possible to be asserted, howsoever impossible it is to be true.) Nor yet could it well admit of any thing to be said to it, but in that ludicrous and sportful way. If we will suppose any to be so foolish, they are to be dealt with according to their folly.

But now as to this other conceit, that Atoms (provided they be of the right stamp or kind) may, a competent number of them assembled together, compose a reasonable soul, is an express Article of the *Epicurean* Creed. And therefore, here, we are to deal more cautiously, not that this is any whit a wiser fanſie than the other; but that the Truth, in this matter, is surer to meet with opposition, in the minds of some persons, already formed unto that wild apprehension, and tinctur'd with it.

Wherefore such must be desired to consider in the *first place*, if they will be true Disciples of *Epicurus* throughout, what he affirms of all Atoms universally, *that they must be simple uncompounded bodies (or if you will corpuscles) not capable of division, or section, by no force dissoluble, and therefore immutable, or in themselves void of any mutation.*

Hereupon let it be next considered, if there were in them (those that are of  
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the right size, shape, and weight) severally, some certain sparks or seeds, of reason (that we may make the supposition as advantageous as we can) or dispositions thereto, yet how shall it be possible to them to communicate? or have that communion with one another, as *together*, to constitute an actually, and completely rational, or thinking thing. If every one could bring somewhat to a common stock, that might be serviceable to that purpose; how shall each ones proportion, or share be imparted? They can none of them emit any thing, there can possibly be no such thing as an *effluviu*m from any of them, inasmuch as they are incapable of diminution; and are themselves each of them as little as the least imaginable *effluviu*m, that we would suppose to proceed from this, or that particular Atom. They can at the most but touch one another; penetrate, or get into one another they cannot. Inasmuch as if any one have a treasure in it, which is in readiness for the making up an intellective faculty, or power among them, that should be common to them all; yet each one remains so lockt up within it self, and is so reserved, and incommunicative, that no other, much  
less

less the whole body of them, can be any jot the wiser. So that this is like to be a very dull assembly.

But then, if there be *nothing of reason* to be communicated, we are yet at a greater loss. For, if it be said having nothing else to communicate, they communicate themselves, but what is that self? is it a rational self? or is every single Atom, that enters this composition, reason? or is it a principle of reason? is it a seed? or is it a part? is it a thought? what shall we suppose? or what is there in the properties assigned to this sort of *Atoms*, that can bespeak it *any of these*? And if none of these can be supposed; what doth their association signify towards ratiocination? They are little, what doth that contribute? therefore there may need the more of them to make a good large soul; but why must a *little thing*, devoid of reason, contribute more towards it, than another *somewhat bigger*? They are *light*, doth that mend the matter? they are the sooner blown away, they can the less co-here, or keep together; they are *the more* easily capable of dissipation, *the less*, of keeping their places in solemn counsel. They are *round*, and exactly *smooth*. But why do they the more convenient-



veniently associate upon that account for this purpose? They cannot therefore come so close together as they might have done, had they been of various figures. They cannot, indeed, give or receive so rude touches. This signifies somewhat towards the *keeping of state*, but what doth it to the *exercise of reason*? Their being so perfectly, and smoothly round, makes them the more incapable of keeping a steady station, they are the more in danger of rolling away, from one another; they can upon this account lay no hold of each other. Their counsels, and resolves are likely to be the more lubricous, and liable to an uncertain volubility. It is not to be imagined what a collection of individuals, only thus qualified, can do when they are come together, an assembly thus constituted. Are we hence to expect Oracles, philosophical Determinations? Maxims of State? And since they are suppos'd to be so much alike, how are the Mathematical Atoms to be distinguished from the Moral? those from the Political? the Contemplative, from the Active? or when the assembly thinks fit to entertain it self with matters of this or that kind, what must be its different composure or posture?

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into what mold or figure must it cast itself for *one purpose*? and into what, for *another*? It's hard to imagine that these little globular bodies, that we may well suppose to be as like as one egg can be to another, should by the meer alteration of their situation, in respect of one another (and no alteration besides can be so much as imagined among them) make so great a change in the complexion of this assembly; so that *now*, it shall be dispos'd to seriousness, and by some transposition of the spherical particles, to mirth, *now* to business, and *by and by* to pleasure: And seeing all humane souls are supposed made of the same sort of material, how are the Atoms model'd in one man, and how in another? what Atoms are there to dispose to *this sect* more, and what to another? or if a good reason can be assigned for their *difference*, what shall be given for their *agreement*? Whence is it that there are so unquestionable, *common*, *notions* every where received? why are not all things transposed in some minds, when such a posture of the Atoms as might infer it, is as supposable as any other? Yea, and since men are found not always to be of one mind, with themselves, it is strange and incom-

comprehensible, that such a situation of these Atoms that constitute his soul should dispose him to be of one opinion, and another of another. How are they to be rang'd when for the affirmative? how for the negative? And yet a great deal more strange, that since their situation is so soon chang'd, and so continually changing (the very substance of the soul being supposed nothing else than a thing very like, but a little finer than a busie and continually moving flame of fire) any man should ever continue to be of the same opinion with himself, one quarter of an hour together; that all notions are not confounded and jumbled; that the same thing is not thought and unthought, resolved and unresolved a thousand times in a day. That is, if any thing could be thought, or resolved at all. Or if this were a *subject* capable of framing, or receiving any sort of notion.

But still that is the greatest difficulty, how there can be such a thing as *thinking*, or *forming of notions*. The case is plain of such notions as have no relation to matter, or dependence upon *external sense* (as what doth that contribute to my contemplation of my *own mind*, and its *acts*, and *powers*; to my ani-

animadversion, or knowing that I think, or will, *this* or *that*?)

But besides, and more generally, what proportion is there between a *thought*, and the *motion of an Atom*? Will we appeal to our faculties, to *our reason it self*? and whither else will we? Is there any cognation, or kindred between the *Idæa's* we have of these things, the casual agitation, of a small particle of matter (be it as little, or as round, as we please to imagine) and an act of *intellection* or *judgment*? And what if there be divers of them together? what can they do more towards the composing an intelligent thing, than many cyphers to the *Arithmetical composition* of a number. It would be as rational to suppose an heap of dust, by long lying together, might at last become rational. Yes, these are things that have (some way or other) the power of motion; and what can they effect by that? they can frisk about, and ply to and fro, and interfere among themselves, and hit, and juggle and tumble over one another, and that will contribute a great deal; about as much, we may suppose, as the shaking of such dust well in a bag, by which means it might possibly become finer and smaller something; and  
by

by continuing that action, at length rational!

No ; but these Atoms, of which the soul is made, have a great advantage by their being dispos'd into a so well-contriv'd and fitly-organiz'd receptacle as the body is. It is indeed true, and admirable, that the body is (as hath been before observed) so fitly framed for the purposes whereto the *whole of it*, and its *several parts*, are designed. But how unfitly is that commodious structure of it it, so much as mentioned, by such as will not allow themselves to own and adore the *wisdom*, and *power*, of its great Architect.

And what if the compofure of the body be so apt and useful, so excellent *in its own kind*; Is it so *in every kind*, or to all imaginable purposes? or what purpose can we possibly imagine more remote, or foreign to the composition of the body, than that the power of ratiocination, should be derived thence? It might as well be said it was so made, to whirl about the Sun, or to govern the motions of the Moon and Stars; as to confer the power of reason, or enable the soul to think, to understand, to deliberate, to will, &c. Yea, its organs, some of them, are much more proportionable



unable to *those actions*, than any of them unto *these*. Which, though a well habited body (while the soul remains in this imprison'd state) do *less hinder*, yet how doth it *help*? and that it might perform these acts without bodily organs, is much more apprehensible than how they can properly be said to be performed by them. And that, though they are done in the body, they would be done much better out of it.

But shall it be granted that these soul-constituting Atoms, till they be (or otherwise than as they are) united with a duly organiz'd body, are utterly destitute of any reasoning or intelligent power? or are they, *by themselves*, apart from this grosser body, irrational? If this be not granted, the thing we intend must be argued out. Either then, *they are*, or they *are not*. If the *latter* be said, Then they have it *of themselves*, without dependance on the organiz'd body; and so we are fairly agreed to quit that pretence, without more ado, of their partaking reason *from thence*. And are only left to weigh over again what hath been already said to evince the contrary, that is, how manifestly absurd it is, to imagine that particles of matter, by their peculiar size, or  
L weight,

weight, or shape, or motion, or all of these together; and that, whether single or associated, should be capable of reasoning. If the *former* be the thing which is resolv'd to be stuck to, that is, that they are of *themselves irrational*, but they become *reasonable* by their *being united in such a prepared, and organized body*. This requires to be a little further considered: And to this purpose it is necessary to obviate a pitiful shift that it is possible some may think fit to use, for the avoiding the force of this *dilemma*; and may rely upon as a ground, why they may judge *this choice* the more secure; that is, that they say they are rational by dependence on the body they animate; because they are only found so united with one another *there*; that *there*, they have the first coalition; *there* they are severed from such as serve not this turn; *there* they are pent in, and held together as long as its due temperament lasts; which, when it fails, they are dissipated, and so lose their great advantage for the *acts of reason*, which they had in such a body. What *pleasure* soever this may yield, it will soon appear it does them little *service*.

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For it only implies, that they have their rationality *of themselves*, so be it that they were together ; and not *immediately* from the body ; or any otherwise, than that they are somewhat beholding to it, for a fair occasion of being together ; as if it were, else, an *unlawful assembly* ; or that they knew not, otherwise, how to meet, and hold together. They will not say that the body gives them *being*, for they are eternal, and self subsisting, as they will have it. Yea and of themselves (tho' the case be otherwise with the *Cartesian* particles) undiminisbable, as to their size, and, as to their figure and weight, unalterable. So that they have neither their littleness, their roundness, nor their lightness from the body, but only their so happy meeting. Admit this, and only *suppose* them to be met out of the body. And why may not this be thought supposable ? If they be not rational till they be met, they cannot have wit enough to scruple meeting, at least somewhere else, than in the body. And who knows but such a chance may happen ; As great as this, are by these persons supposed to have happened, before the world could have come to this pass it is now at ; who can tell but such

a number of the same sort of Atoms (it being natural for things so much of a complexion and temper to associate and find out one another) might ignorantly, and thinking no harm, come together? And having done so, why might they not keep together? Do they need to be pent in? How are they pent in, whilst in the body? If they be dispos'd, they have ways enough to get out. And if they must needs be inclin'd to scatter when the crisis of the body fails, surely a way might be found to hemme them in, if that be all, at the time of expiration, more tightly and closely, than they could be in the body. And what reason can be devised, why, being become rational, by their having been assembled in the body, they may not agree to hold together, and do so in spite of fate, or maugre all ordinary accidents, when they find it convenient to leave it. And then upon these no-way impossible suppositions (according to their principles, so far as can be understood, with whom we have to do) will they now be rational out of the body? Being still endowed (as they cannot but be) with the same high privileges of being little, round, and light, and being still also together; and somewhat more,

more it may be, at liberty, to roll and tumble, and mingle with one another, than in the body? If it be now affirmed, they will, in this case, be rational, at least as long as they hold together, then we are but where we were. And this shift hath but diverted us a little; but so, as it was easie to bring the matter, again, about, to the same point we were at before. Wherefore the shelter of the body being thus quite again forsaken, this poor expelled crew, of dislodging Atoms, are exposed to fight, in the open air, for their rationality, against all that was said before.

But if this refuge and sanctuary of the body be not meerly pretended to, but really and plainly trusted in and stuck to. Then are we sincerely, and honestly to consider what a body so variously organiz'd can do, to make such a party of Atoms (that of themselves are not so, singly, nor together) become rational. And surely, if the cause were *not saved* before, it is now deplorate, and *lost* without remedy. For what do they find *here* that can thus, beyond all expectation, improve them to so high an excellency? Is it flesh, or bloud, or bones that puts this stamp upon them? Think, what is the substance



of the nobler parts, the liver, or heart, or brain, that they should turn these, before, irrational Atoms, when they fall into them, into rational, any more than if they were well soak'd in a quagmire, or did insinuate themselves into a piece of soft dough? But *here* they meet with a benign, and kindly heat, and warmth, which comfortably fosters and cherishes them, till at length it hath hatched them into rational. But methinks they should be warm enough of themselves, since they are supposed so much to resemble fire. And however, wherein do we find a flame of fire more rational, than a piece of ice? Yea but here they find a due temper of moisture as well as heat. And that surely doth not signifie much; for if the common maxim be true, that the *dry soul is the wisest*, they might have been much wiser, if they had kept themselves out of the body. And since it's necessary the soul should consist of that peculiar sort of Atoms before describ'd; and the *organical body* (which must be said for distinction sake, the Soul being, all this while supposed a body also) consists of Atoms too, that are of a much courser alloy, methinks a mixture should not be necessary, but an hinderance, and great debasement,

basement, rather, to this rational composition. Besides, that it cannot be understood, if it were necessary these Atoms should receive any tincture from the body, in order to their being rational, *what* they can receive, or *how* they can receive *any thing*. They have not pores that can admit an adventitious moisture, though it were of the divinest nectar, and the body could never so plentifully furnish them with it. Wherein then lies the great advantage these Atoms have *by being in the body*, to their commencing rational? If there be such advantage, why can it not be understood? why is it not assigned? why should we further spend our guesses what may possibly be said? But yet, may not much be attributed to the convenient, and well fenced, cavity of the brains receptacle, or the more secret chambers within that? where the studious Atoms may be very private and free from disturbance? Yet sure it is hard to say, why they that are wont to do it *here*, might not as well philosophize in some well-chosen cavern, or hole of a Rock; nor were it impossible to provide them *there*, of as soft a bed. And yet would it not be some relief to speak of the fine slender pipes, winding to

and fro, wherein they may be conveyed, so conveniently, from place to place; that if they do not fall into a reasoning humour *in one place*, they may *in another*? why, what can this do? It seems somewhat like *Balaam's* project, to get into a vein of incantation, by changing stations. And transplace them as you will, it requires more *magick* than ever he was master of, to make those innocent, harmless, things, *masters of reason*.

For do but consider, what if you had a large phial capable of as great a quantity as you can think needful, of very fine particles, and, replenish'd with them, closely stoppt, and well luted; suppose these as pure, and fit for the purpose, as you can imagine; only not yet rational; will their faring to and fro, through very close and stanch tubes, from one such receptacle to another, make them at last become so? It seems then, do what you will with them, toss and tumble them hither and thither, rack them from vessel to vessel, try what methods you can devise of sublimation or improvement, every thing looks like a vain and hopeless essay. For indeed, do what you please or can think of, they are such immutable entities,

tities, you can never make them *less*, or *finer*, than they originally were : And rational they were not *before their meeting*, in the body ; wherefore it were a strange wonder, if *that* should so far alter the case with them, that they should become rational *by it*.

XII. And now, I must, upon the whole profess not to be well pleased with the strain of this discourse ; not that I think it *unsuitable to its subject* (for I see not how it is fitly to be dealt with in a more serious way) but that I *dislike the subject*. And were it not that it is too obvious, how prone the minds of some are to run themselves into any the grossest absurdities rather than admit the plain and easie sentiments of Religion : It were miserable trifling to talk at this rate, and a loss of time not to be endured. But when an unaccountable aversion to the acknowledgement and adoration of the ever-blessed Deity, hurries away men, affrighted and offended at the lustre of his so manifest appearances, to take a bad, but the only, shelter, the case can admit, under the wings of any the most silly, foolish *figment* ; though the ill temper and dangerous state of the *persons*, is to be thought

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thought on, with much pity; yet *the things*, which they pretend, being in themselves *ridiculous*, if we will entertain them into our thoughts at all, can not fitly be entertained but with *derision*. Nor doth it more unbecome a *serious person*, to laugh at what is *ridiculous*, than gravely, to *weigh and ponder*, what is *weighty and considerable*. Provided he do not seek occasions, of that former sort on, purpose to gratifie a vain humour; but only allow himself to discourse sutable to them, when they occur. And their dotage who would fain serve themselves off so wildly extravagant, and impossible suppositions; for the fostering their horrid misbelief, that they have *no God to worship*, would certainly justifie as sharp *ironies*, as the Prophet *Elijah* bestows upon them who *worshipped Baal*, instead of the *true God*.

XIII. Nor is any thing here said intended as a reflection on *such*, as being unfurnished with a notion of created, intelligent *spirits*, that might distinguish *their substance* from the most *subtile matter*, have therefore thought that their *mind* or *thinking power*, might have some such *substratum*, unto which it is  
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Super-added, or imprest thereon by a *divine hand*; in the mean time not doubting their immortality, much less the existence of a *Deity*, the *Author* and *Former* of them, and *all things*. For they are no way guilty of that blasphemous nonsense. to make them consist of necessary, self-subsistent matter, every minute particle whereof is judged *eternal*, and *immutable*, and *in themselves*, for ought we can find asserted, *destitute of reason*; and which yet acquire it by no one knows what *coalition*, without the help of a *wise efficient*, that shall direct and order it to so unimaginable an improvement. *These persons* do only think more refined matter *capable* of that impression, and stamp; or of having *such a power* put into it, by the *Creators all-disposing hand*. Wherein, to do them right, though they should impose somewhat hardly upon themselves, if they will make this estimate of the *natural capacity* of matter; or if they think the *acts* and *power* of *reason* in man, altogether *unnatural* to him. Yet they do, in effect, the more befriend the cause we are pleading for (as much as it can be befriended by a mis-apprehension; which yet is a thing of that untoward *genius*, and doth so ill consort with

with truth, that it's never admitted as a friend, in *any one respect*; but it repays it with a mischievous revenge, *in some other*, as might many ways be shewn in this instance, if it were within the compass of our present design.) It being evident, that if any portion of matter shall indeed, be certainly found the *actual subject* of *such powers*, and to have *such operations* belonging to it, there is the plainer, and more undeniable, necessity, and demonstration, of his *power* and *wisdom*, who can make *any thing*, of *any thing*; of *stones*, raise up *children to Abraham*! and who shall then have done that which is so altogether impossible, except to him *to whom all things are possible*. There is the more manifest need of his hand to heighten *dull matter*, to a qualifiedness for performances, so much above *its nature*; To make the loose, and independent parts of so *fluid matter*, cohere, and hold together; that, if it were once made capable of *knowledge*, and the actual subject of it; whatsoever notions were impressed thereon, might not be, in a moment, confounded and lost. As indeed, they could not but be, if the *particles of matter* were the immediate *seat of reason*; and so steady a hand did not hold them, in

a *settled composure*, that they be not disordered, and men have, thence, the necessity of beginning *afresh*, to *know any thing*, every hour of the day. Tho' yet it seems a great deal more reasonable to suppose the souls of men to be of a substance *in it self* more consistent; and more agreeable to our experience; who find a continual ebbing and flowing of spirits, without being sensible of any so notable, and sudden changes, *in our knowledge*, as we could not but, thereupon, observe in our selves; if *they*, or *any as fluid finer matter*, were the immediate subjects of it.

It is therefore, however, sufficiently evident, and out of question, that the *humane soul* (be its *own substance* what it will) must have an *efficient* divers from *matter*; which it was our present intendment to evince. And so our way is clear to proceed to;

XIV. The *second enquiry*, whether it be not also manifest from the powers and operations which belong to it as it is reasonable, that it must have had an *intelligent efficient*? That is; since we find, and are assured, that there is a *sort of Being* in the world (yea *somewhat of our selves*, and that hath *best right*, of  
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*any thing else about us, to be called our selves*) that can think, understand, deliberate, argue, &c. And which we can most certainly assure our selves (whether it were *pre-existent* in any former state, or no) is not an *independent*, or *uncaused Being*; and hath therefore been the *effect* of some *cause*, whether it be not apparently the effect of a *wise Cause*?

And *this*, upon supposition of what hath been before proved, seems not liable to any the least rational doubt. For it is already apparent, that it is not *it self matter*; and if it were, it is however the more apparent, that *its cause* is *not matter*. Inasmuch, as if it be it *self matter*, its *powers*, and *operations* are so much above the *natural capacity* of *matter*, as that it must have had a *cause*, so much more noble, and of a more perfect nature, *than that*, as to be able to raise and improve it, beyond the *natural capacity* of *matter*: which it was impossible for *that*, it self, to do. Whence it is plain, it must have a *cause divers from matter*.

Wherefore *this its immaterial cause* must either be *wise*, and *intelligent*, or not so. But is it possible any man should ever be guilty of a greater absurdity than to acknowledge, some certain *immaterial*  
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*al Agent*, destitute of *Wisdom*, the *only cause*, and *fountain* of all that *Wisdom*, that *is*, or hath ever been in the whole race of mankind. That is as much as to say, that all the wisdom of mankind *hath been caused without a cause*. For it is the same thing, after we have acknowledged any thing to be *caused*, to say it was *caused by no cause*, as to say it was *caused by such a cause*, as hath nothing of *that in it*, whereof we find *somewhat, to be in the effect*. Nor can it avail any thing, to speak of the disproportion, or superiour excellency, *in some effects* to their *second*, or to their only *partial* causes. As that there are sometimes *learned* children of *unlearned* parents. For who did ever in that case, say the parents were the productive causes of that learning? or of them *as they were learned*? Sure that *learning* comes from *some other cause*. But shall it then be said, the souls of men have received *their being* from some such *immaterial Agent destitute of wisdom*; and afterward, their *wisdom*, and *intellectual ability* came *some other way*; by their own observation, or by *institution*, and *precept*, from others? whence then came their *capacity* of observing, or of receiving such instruction? Can any thing *naturally destitute* even of *seminal reason*

*reason* (as we may call it) or of any *aptitude*, or *capacity* tending thereto, ever be able to make observations, or receive instructions, whereby at length it may become rational? And is not that capacity of the soul of man a *real something*? or is there no difference between being *capable of reason* and *incapable*? what then, did this *real something* proceed from *nothing*? or was the soul *itself* caused, and this its *capacity*, *uncaused*? or was *its cause*, only, capable of *intellectual perfection*, but not *actually* furnished therewith? But if it were *only capable*, surely its advantages for the actual attainment thereof have been much greater than ours. Whence it were *strange* if that *capacity* should never have come into *act*. And *more strange*, that we should *know*, or have *any ground to pretend*, that it *hath not*. But that there was an *actual exercise* of wisdom in the production of the *reasonable soul* is most evident. For is it a necessary being? that we have proved it is not. It is therefore a contingent, and its being depended on a *free cause*, into whose pleasure, only, it was resolvable, that it should *be*, or *not be*. And which therefore had a dominion over its own Acts. If this bespeak not an *intelligent Agent*, what doth? And

And though this might also be said concerning every thing else *which is not necessarily*; and so might yield a *more general argument* to evince a free, designing cause; yet it concludes with greater evidence concerning the *reasonable soul*; whose powers and operations it is so manifestly impossible should have proceeded from *matter*. And therefore even that vain (and refuted) pretence it self, that other things might, by the necessary laws of *its* motion, become what they are, can have less place *here*. Whence it is more apparent that the reasonable soul must have had a free and intelligent cause, that used liberty, and counsel, in determining that it should be, and especially that it should be *such a sort of thing* as we find it is. For when we see how aptly its powers and faculties serve for their proper and peculiar operations, who that is not besides himself can think that such a thing was made by one that knew not what he was doing? or that *such powers* were not given on purpose for *such operations*? And what is the *capacity* but a power that should sometime be reduced into *act*, and arrive to the exercise of reason it self?

Now was it possible any thing should give that power that had it not *any way*?

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that is in the *same kind*, or in some *more excellent and noble kind* ? For we contend not that this Agent whereof we speak is in the strict and proper sense *rational*, taking that *term* to import an ability or faculty of inferring what is *less known* from what is *more*. For we suppose all things equally known to him (which so far as is requisite to our present design, that is the representing him the *proper object of Religion*, or of *that honour*, which the dedication of a Temple to him, imports, we may in due time come *more expressly* to assert,) and that the knowledge, which is, with us, the *end* of reasoning, is *in him*, in its highest perfection without being at all beholden to that *means* ; that all the connexion of things with one another, lie open to one comprehensive view ; and are *known to be* connected ; but not *because they are so*. We say, is it conceivable that mans knowing power should proceed from a cause that hath it not, *in the same, or this more perfect kind* ? And may use those words to this purpose, not for *their authority* (which we expect not should be *here* significant) but the *convincing evidence* they carry with them, *He that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he know* ? That we may drive  
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this matter to an issue, 'tis evident, the soul of man is not a *necessary, self-originate* thing: And had therefore *some cause*. We find it to have *knowledge*, or the *power of knowing*, belonging to it. Therefore we say, *so had its cause*. We rely not here upon the *credit* of vulgar maxims (whereof divers might be mentioned) but the *reason* of them, or of the thing it self we alledge. And do now speak of the *whole intire cause* of *this being*, the *humane soul*, or of whatsoever is causal of it; or of any perfection *naturally* appertaining to it. It is of an intelligent nature. Did this intelligent nature proceed from an unintelligent, as the *whole and only cause* of it? That were to speak against our own eyes, and most natural, common, sentiments. And were the same thing as to say that *something came of nothing*. For it is all one to say so, and to say that any thing *communicated* what it had not *to communicate*. Or (which is alike madly absurd) to say that the same thing was *such*, and *not such*, intelligent, and not intelligent, *able* to communicate an intelligent nature (for sure what it doth it is able to do) and *not able* (for it is not able to communicate what it hath not) at the same time.

It is hardly here worth the while to spend time in countermining that contemptible Refuge (which is as incapable of *offending* us, as of *being defended*) that *humane souls may perhaps, only have proceeded in the ordinary course of Generation, from one another.* For that none have ever said any thing to that purpose, deserving a confutation, except that some sober, and pious persons, for the avoiding of some other difficulties, have thought it more safe to assert the traduction of humane souls; who yet were far enough from imagining that they could be *total*, or *first* causes to one another: And doubted not, but they had the constant necessary assistance of that *same Being*, we are pleading for, acting *in his own sphere*, as the first cause in *all such* (as well as *any other productions.* Wherein they nothing oppose the main design of this discourse. And therefore it is not in our way to offer at any opposition unto them.

But if any have a mind to indulge themselves the liberty of so much dotage as to say the souls of men were *first* and *only* causes to one another. Either they must suppose them to be *material* beings. And then we refer them to what hath been already said, shewing, that

that their powers and operations cannot belong to matter; nor arise from it. Or *immaterial*, and then, they cannot produce one another in the way of generation. For of what pre-existent substance are they made? *Theirs* who beget them? of that they can part with nothing, separability, at least, of parts being a most confessed property of matter. Or *some other*? where will they find *that other* spiritual substance, that belong'd not *inseparably*, to some *individual being* before? And besides, if it were pre-existent, as it must be if a soul be generated out of it, then they were not the *first and only causes* of this production.

And *in another way*, than that of *generation*, how will any *form the notion of making a soul*? Let experience and the making of trial, convince the *Speculators*. By what *power*, or by what *art* will they make a reasonable soul spring up out of nothing?

It might be hoped that *thus*, without disputing the possibility of an eternal, successive production of souls, this shift may appear vain. But if any will persist and say, that *how*, or *in what way soever* they are produc'd; 'Tis strange, if they need any *nobler cause*, than *themselves*;

for may not any living thing well enough be thought capable of producing another of the *same kind* ? of no more than *equal perfection* with it self ? To this we say, besides that no one living thing is the *only cause* of *another such* ; yet if that were admitted possible, what will it avail ? For hath *every soul* that hath ever existed, or been *in being* been produced , in this way, by another ? This it were ridiculous to say ; for if every one were so produced, there was then *some one*, before *every one*. Inasmuch as that which produces, must surely have been before that which is produced by it. But how can *every one* have *one before it* ? A manifest contradiction in the very terms ! For then there will be one without the compass of *every one*. And how is it then said to be *every one* ? There is then it seems *one*, besides, or more than *all*. And so *all* is not *all*. And if this be thought a sophism, let the matter be soberly considered thus. The soul of man is either a thing of that nature universally (and consequently every individual soul) as that it doth exist of it self, necessarily and independently, or not ? If it be. Then we have, however, a wise intelligent *being* necessarily existing. The  
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thing we have been proving all this while. Yet this concession we will not accept, for though it is most certain there is such a *being*, we have also proved the humane soul is not *it*. Whence it is evidently a *dependent being*, in its own nature, that could never have been *of its self*, and consequently not at all, had it not been put into being *by somewhat else*. And being so *in its own nature*, it must be thus with every one that partakes of *this nature*. And consequently it must be somewhat of *another nature* that did put the souls of men into being. Otherwise the whole stock, and lineage of humane souls is said to have been dependent on a productive cause, and yet had nothing whereon to depend. And so is both caused by another, and not caused. And therefore since it is hereby evident it was somewhat else, and of another nature, than an humane soul, by which all humane souls were produced into being. We again say, that distinct Being either was a dependent, caused *Being*, or not. If not, it being proved that the soul of man cannot but have had an intelligent, or wise cause, we have now what we seek. An *independent, necessary, intelligent Being*. If it do depend,



or any will be so idle to say so; That however will infallibly and very speedily lead us to the *same mark*. For tho' some have been pleased to dream of an infinite succession of *individuals* of this or that kind; I suppose we have no dream as yet, *ready formed*, to come under confutation, of *infinite kinds* or orders of beings, gradually superiour, one above another; the inferiour still depending on the superiour, and all upon nothing

And therefore, I conceive, we may fairly take leave of this argument from the *humane soul*, as having gained from it sufficient evidence, of the existence of a *necessary Being*, that is intelligent, and designingly active, or guided by wisdom, and counsel, in what it doth.

We might also, if it were needful, further argue the same thing from a power, or ability manifestly superiour to, and that exceeds the utmost perfection of *humane nature*, viz. that of *Prophecy*, or the *prediction of future contingencies*; yea, and from another that exceeds the whole sphere of all *created nature*, and which crosses and countermands the known and stated laws thereof, viz. *that of working miracles*; both of them exercised *with manifest design*; as might evidently

evidently be made appear, by manifold instances, to as many, as can believe any thing to be true; more than what they have seen with their own eyes. And that do not take present sense (yea and their own only) to be the alone measure of all reality. But it is not necessary we insist upon every thing that may be said; so that enough be said to serve our present purpose.

XV. And that our purpose may yet be more fully served; and such a Being evidenced to exist as we may with satisfaction esteem to *merit a Temple with us*, and the *Religion of it*; it is necessary that we add somewhat concerning

9. The Divine *Goodness*; for unto that eternal *Being*, whose existence we have hitherto asserted, Goodness also cannot but appertain; together with those his other Attributes we have spoken of.

It is not needful here to be curious about the usual, scholastical, *notions* of *Goodness*, or what it imports, as it is wont to be attributed to *Being* in the general, what, as it belongs, in a peculiar sense, to intellectual Beings, or what more special import it may have; in reference to *this*.

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That which we at present chiefly intend by it is *a propension to do good with delight*; or *most freely* without other inducement, than the agreeableness of it to his nature who doth it; and a certain delectation and complacency, which, hence, is taken in so doing. The name of *Goodness* (though *thus* it more peculiarly signifies the particular virtue of liberality) is of a significancy large enough, even in the *moral acceptation*, to comprehend all other perfections or virtues, that belong to, or may any way commend the will of a free Agent. These therefore we exclude not; and particularly whatsoever is wont to be signified (as attributable unto God) by the names of *Holiness* [as a steady inclination unto what is intellectually pure, and comely, with an aversion to the contrary] *Justice* as that signifies [an inclination to deal equally] which is included in the former, yet as *more expressly* denoting what is more proper to a Governour over others, *viz.* [a resolution not to let the transgression of laws made for the preservation of common order, pass without due animadversion and punishment.] *Truth*, whose signification also may be wholly contained under those former more general terms,  
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but more directly contains [sincerity, unaptness to deceive, and constancy to ones word:] For these may properly be stiled *good things* in a *moral sense*. As many other things might, in *another notion of goodness*, which it belongs not to our present design to make mention of. But these are mentioned as more directly tending to represent to us an *amiable object of Religion*. And are referr'd hither, as they fitly enough may, out of an unwillingness to multiply without necessity, particular heads, or subjects of discourse.

In the mean time, as was said, what we principally intend, is, That the *Being* whose existence we have been endeavouring to evince is *good*, as that imports a ready inclination of will to communicate unto others what may be good to them; creating *first*, its own object, and then issuing forth to it, in acts of *free beneficence*, futable to the nature of every thing created by it. Which tho' it be the *primary*, or first thing carried in the Notion of this goodness. Yet because that *inclination* is not otherwise *good*, than as it consists with holiness, justice and Truth; These therefore may be esteemed *secondarily*, at least to belong to it, as inseparable qualifications thereof.

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Wherefore it is not a *meerly natural*, and *necessary emanation* we here intend, that prevents any act or exercise of counsel or design; which would no way consist with the *liberty of the Divine will*: And would make the Deity as well a *necessary Agent*, as a *necessary Being*; Yea, and would therefore make all the creatures *meerly natural*, and *necessary emanations*, and so destroy the distinction of *necessary*, and *contingent Beings*. And, by consequence, bid fair to the making all things God. It would infer not only the *eternity of the world*, but would seem to infer either the *absolute infinity* of it, or the *perfection* of it, and of every creature in it, to that degree, as that nothing could be *more perfect in its own kind*, than it is; or would infer the *finiteness* of the *Divine Being*. For it would make *what he hath done* the adequate measure of *what he can do*. And would make all his administrations *necessary*, yea, and all the actions of men, and consequently take away *all Law*, and *Government* out of the world, and *all measures of right*, and *wrong*, and make all *punitive justice*, *barbarous cruelty*. And consequently, give us a *notion of Goodness*, at length, plainly inconsistent with it self. All



All this is provided against, by our having first asserted the *Wisdom* of that *Being* whereunto we also attribute *goodness*. Which guides all the issues of it, according to those measures, or rules, which the essential rectitude of the Divine will gives, or rather is, unto it. Whereby also a foundation is laid of answering such cavils against the *Divine Goodness*, as they are apt to raise to themselves, who are wont to magnifie this attribute to the suppression of others. Which is, indeed, in the end, to magnifie it to *nothing*.

And *such goodness* needs no other demonstration, than the visible instances, and effects we have of it, in the *creation*, and *conservation* of this world; and particularly, in his large, munificent bounty, and kindness towards man; whereof his *designing him for his Temple*, and residence, will be a full, and manifest proof.

And of all this, his own *self-sufficient fulness* leaves it impossible to us, to imagine *another reason*, than *the delight* he takes in dispensing his own free and large communications. Besides, that when we see some *semblances*, and *imitations*, of *this goodness*, in the natures of some men, which we are sure are  
not

*not nothing*, they must needs proceed-  
from *something*, and have some foun-  
tain, and original, which can be no o-  
ther, than the *common Cause, and Au-  
thor of all things*. In whom, therefore,  
*this goodness doth firstly, and most per-  
fectly reside.*

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## C H A P. IV.

Generally all supposable perfection, asser-  
ted of this Being, where, First a Being  
absolutely perfect, is endeavoured to  
be evinced from the (already proved)  
necessary Being. Which is shewn to im-  
port in the general, The utmost fulness  
of Being. Also divers things, in par-  
ticular that tend to evince that general.  
As that it is, at the remotest distance  
from no Being. Most purely actual.  
Most abstracted Being. The productive  
and conserving cause of all things  
else. Undiminisbable. Uncapable of  
addition. Secondly, hence is more ex-  
pressly deduced the infiniteness of this  
Being. An enquiry whether it be pos-  
sible the Creature can be actually infi-  
nite? Difficulties concerning the abso-  
lute

*lute fulness, and Infiniteness of God considered. 2. The onliness of his Being. The Trinity not thereby excluded.*

I. **S**ome account hath been thus far given of that *Being*, whereunto we have been designing to assert the *honour of a Temple*. Each of the particulars having been severally insisted on, that concur to make up *that notion* of this Being, which was at first laid down. And more largely, what hath been more oppos'd, by persons of an atheistical or irreligious temper. But, because in that forementioned account of God, there was added to the *particulars* there enumerated (out of a just consciousness of humane inability to comprehend every thing that may possibly belong to him) *this general supplement*.

[*That all other supposable excellencies whatsoever, do in the highest perfection, appertain also originally, unto this Being*] It is requisite that somewhat be said concerning this addition. Especially in as much as it comprehends in it, or may infer, some things (not yet expressly mentioned) which may be thought necessary to the evincing the reasonableness of *Religion*, or our *self-dedication as a Temple to him*.

For

For instance, it may possibly be alledged, that, if it were admitted there is somewhat that is *eternal, uncaused, independent, necessarily existent, that is self-active, living, powerful, wise, and good*. Yet all this will not infer upon us an universal obligation to Religion, unless it can also be evinced,

1. That this Being is every way *sufficient* to supply and satisfy all our real wants and just desires.
2. And that this Being is *but one*, and so that all be at a certainty where their Religion ought to terminate. And that the worship of *every Temple*, must concenter, and meet, in the *same object*.

Now the eviſtion of an *absolutely perfect Being* would include each of these; and answer both the purposes which may seem hitherto not so fully satisfied. It is therefore requisite that we endeavour.

First to shew that the Being hitherto described is *absolutely or every way perfect*.

Secondly, To deduce, from the same grounds, the absolute *infinity*, and the

the *unity* (or the onliness) thereof.

II. And for the former part of this undertaking, It must be acknowledged *absolute or universal perfection*, cannot be pretended to have been express'd in *any*, or in *all* the works of God, together. Neither *in number*, for ought we know (for as we cannot conceive, nor consequently speak of Divine perfections, but under the notion of *many*, whatsoever their *real identity* may be, so we do not know, but that within the compass of *universal perfection*, there may be some *particular ones*, of which there is no footstep in the creation, and whereof we have never formed any thought.) Nor (more certainly) *in degree*; For surely the world, and the particular creatures in it, are not so perfect, in correspondence to those attributes of its great Architect, which we have mentioned, *viz.* his Power, Wisdom, and Goodness, as he might have made them, if he had pleas'd. And indeed, to say the world were absolutely, and universally perfect, were to make *that* God.

Wherefore it must also be acknowledged that an *absolutely perfect Being* cannot be *immediately* demonstrated  
N from



from its effects, as whereto they neither *do*, nor is it within the capacity of created nature that they *can*, adequately correspond. Whence therefore, all that can be done for the evincing of the *absolute and universal perfection* of God, must be in some other way, or method of discourse.

And though it be acknowledged that it cannot be *immediately* evidenced from the Creation, yet it is to be hoped that *mediately* it may. For from thence (as we have seen) a necessary self-originate Being, such as hath been described, is, with the greatest certainty, to be concluded; and, from thence, if we attentively consider, we shall be led to an *absolutely perfect one*. That is, since we have the same certainty of such a *necessary self-originate Being*, as we have that there is any thing existent at all. If we seriously weigh what *kind of Being*, *this* must needs be, or what *its notion* must import, abovementioned hath been already evinced: We shall not be found, in this way, much to fall short of our present aim (tho' we have also other evidence that may be produced in its own, fitter, place.)

Here therefore let us a while make a stand, and more distinctly consider how far

far we are already advanced, that we may, with the better order, and advantage, make our further progress.

These two things then are already evident.

[First, That there is a *necessary Being* that hat been eternally of it self, without dependence upon any thing, either as a *productive*, or *conserving* cause. And, *of it self*, full of activity, and vital energy, so as to be a *productive*, and *sustaining cause*, to other things.]

Of this any the most confused, and indistinct view of this world, or a meer taking notice, that there is any thing in Being, that lives and moves, and withal that alters and changes, (which it is impossible the *necessary Being* it self should do) cannot but put us out of doubt.

Secondly, [That this necessary self-originate, vital, active Being hath very vast Power, admirable Wisdom, and most free and large goodness belonging to it.] And of this, our nearer and more deliberate view and contemplation of the world do equally ascertain us. For of these things we find the manifest prints and footsteps in it. Yea, we find the (derived) things themselves [Power, Wisdom, Goodness] in the crea-

tures. And we are most assured they have not sprung *from nothing*; nor from *any thing* that had them not. And that which originally had them, or was their first fountain must have them necessarily, and essentially (together with whatsoever else belongs to its Being) *in, and of its self*. So that the asserting of any other *necessary being*, that is *in it self* destitute of *these things*, signifies no more towards the giving any account how these things came to be in the world, than if no Being, necessarily existing, were asserted at all. We are therefore, by the exigency of the case it self, constrained to acknowledge, not only that there is a *necessary Being*, but that there *is such a one, as could be, and was*, the fountain and cause of all those several kinds, and degrees of *being*, and *perfection*, that we take notice of in the world besides. Another sort of *necessary Being*, should not only be asserted to no purpose, there being nothing to be gained by it, no imaginable use to be made of it, as a principle that can serve any valuable end. (For suppose such a thing as *necessary matter*, it will as hath been shewn be unalterable; and therefore another sort of matter must be supposed besides it, that may be the matter of  
the

the universe, raised up out of nothing for that purpose, unto which this so unwieldy and unmanagable an entity, can never serve.) But also it will be impossible to be proved. No man can be able with any plausible shew of reason to make it out. Yea, and much may be said ( I conceive with convincing evidence) against it. As may perhaps be seen in the sequel of this discourse.

In the mean time, that there is, however, a *necessary Being*, unto which *all the perfections, whereof* we have any footsteps, or resemblances in the Creation, do originally and essentially belong, is undeniably evident.

Now, that we may proceed, what can self-essentiate, underived, Power, Wisdom, Goodness be but most perfect Power, Wisdom, Goodness? *Or such*, as than which, there can never be more perfect?

For since there can be no Wisdom, Power, or Goodness, which is not either original and self-essentiate, or derived and participated from thence? Who sees not that the former must be the more perfect. Yea, and that it comprehended all the other (as what was from it) in it self. And consequently that it is simply the most perfect? And

the reason will be the same, concerning any other perfection, the stamps and characters whereof we find signed upon the creatures.

But that the Being unto which these belong is absolutely and universally perfect *in every kind*, must be further evidenced by considering more at large the notion and import of *such a self-originate necessary Being*.

\* So that whatever there is of strength in that way of arguing, the glory of it cannot be without injury appropriated to the present age, much less to any

Some indeed, both more anciently, \* and of late have inverted this course; and from the supposition of *absolute perfection* have gone about to infer *necessity of existence*, as being contained in the *Idæa* of the former. But of this latter we are otherwise assured, upon clearer and less exceptionable terms. And being so, are to consider what improvement may be made of it to our present purpose.

particular person therein: It having since *Anselm*, been ventilated by divers others heretofore. *D. Scot. dist 2. Q. 2. Th. Aquin. P. 1. Q. 2. art 1. contra Gentil. l. 1. c. 10. Bradwardin, l. 1. c. 1.* And by divers of late, as is sufficiently known, some rejecting, others much confiding in it, both of these former, and of modern Writers.

And in the general, this seems manifestly imported in the notion of *the necessary Being* we have already evinced, *that it have in it* (some way or other, in what way there will be occasion to consider



sider hereafter) the *entire sum and utmost fulness of Being*, beyond which or without the compass whereof, no perfection is conceivable, or indeed (which is of the same import) *nothing*.

Let it be observed that we pretend not to argue this from the bare terms *necessary Being*, only, but from hence, *that it is such*, as we have found it. Tho' indeed, these very terms import not a little to this purpose. For that which is *necessarily*, of it self without being beholden to *any thing*, seems as good as *all things*, and to contain in it self an immense fulness; being indigent of nothing. Nor by indigence is here meant *cravingness*, or a *sense of want* only; in opposition whereto, every good and virtuous man hath or may attain, a sort of *αὐτάρκεια* or self-fulness and *be satisfied from himself* (which yet is a stamp of Divinity, and a part of the image of God, or such a participation of the Divine Nature, as is agreeable to the state and condition of a creature,) But we understand by it (what is naturally before that) *want it self* really, and not in opinion (as the covetous is said to be poor.) On the other hand we here intend not a meerly rational (much less an imaginary) but a

real self-fulness. And so we say, what is of that nature, that it is, and subsists wholly, and only of it self, without depending on any other, must owe this absoluteness, to so peculiar an excellency of its own nature, as we cannot well conceive to be less, than whereby it comprehends in it self, the most boundless and unlimited fulness of Being, life, power, or whatsoever can be conceived under the name of a perfection. For taking notice of the existence of any thing whatsoever, some reason must be assignable, whence it is that this particular Being doth exist? and hath such and such powers and properties belonging to it, as do occur to our notice therein? when we can now resolve its existence into some cause, that put it into Being, and made it what it is; we cease so much to admire the thing, how excellent soever it be, and turn our admiration upon *its cause*, concluding *that* to have all the perfection in it, which we discern in the *effect*, whatsoever unknown perfection (which we may suppose is very great) it may have besides. And upon this ground we are led, when we behold the manifold excellencies that lie dispers'd among particular Beings,  
in

in this universe, with the glory of the whole, resulting thence, to resolve their existence into a common cause, which we design by the name of *God*. And now considering him as a *wise Agent*, (which hath been proved) and consequently a *free* one, that acted not from any necessity of nature, but his meer *good pleasure* herein, we will not only conclude him to have all that perfection and excellency in him, which we find him to have display'd in so vast and glorious a work; but will readily believe him (supposing we have admitted a conviction concerning what hath been discoursed before) to have a most unconceivable treasure of hidden excellency, and perfection in him, that is not represented to our view in this work of his. And account, that he who could do all this which we see is done, could do unspeakably more. For though, speaking of *natural*, and *necessitated Agents*, which always act to their uttermost, it would be absurd to argue from their having done some lesser thing, to their power of doing somewhat that is much greater. Yet as to *free Agents*, that can choose their own act, and guide themselves by wisdom and judgment therein, the matter is not so;

so : As when some great Prince bestows a rich largess upon some mean person, especially that deserved nothing from him, or was recommended by nothing to his royal favour, besides his poverty, and misery ; we justly take it for a very significant demonstration of that princely munificence, and bounty, which would incline him to do much greater things, when he should see a *proportionable* cause.

But now, if taking notice of the excellencies that appear in *caused Beings*, and enquiring how they come to exist and be what they are, we resolve all into *their cause* ; which, considering as perfectly free and arbitrary in all his communications ; We do thence rationally conclude, that if he had thought fit, he could have made a much more pompous display of himself ; and that there is in him, besides what appears, a vast and most abundant store of undiscovered perfection.

When next, we turn our enquiry and contemplation, more entirely, upon the cause. And bethink our selves : But how came he to exist and be what he is ? Finding this cannot be refunded upon any *superiour cause* ; And our utmost enquiry can admit of no other  
result,

result, but this, *that he is of himself what he is.* We will surely say then, he is *all in all.* And that perfection, which before, we judged vastly great, we will now conclude *altogether absolute*, and such beyond which no greater can be thought.

Adding I say to what pre-conceptions we had of his greatness, from the works which we see have been done by him (for why should we lose any ground we might esteem our selves to have gain'd before?) the consideration of his necessary self-subsistence : And that no other reason is assignable of his being what he is, but the peculiar and incommunicable excellency of his own nature. Whereby he was not only able to make such a world, but did possess eternally and invariably in himself all that he is, and hath : We cannot conceive that *all* to be less than *absolutely universal* ; and comprehensive of whatsoever can lie within the whole compass of being.

For when we find that among all other Beings ( which is most certainly true not only of *actual*, but all *possible* Beings also) how perfect soever they are or may be in their own kinds ; none of them, nor all of them together, are  
or



or ever can be, of that perfection, as to be of themselves, without dependence on somewhat else, as their productive, yea and sustaining cause; we see, besides that their cause hath all the perfection, some way, in it that is to be found in them all: There is also that appropriate perfection belonging thereto, that it could be; and eternally is (yea and could not but be) only of it self, by the underived and incommunicable excellency of its own Being. And surely, what includes in it all the perfection of all actual and possible Beings, besides its own (for there is nothing possible which some cause, yea and even *this*, cannot produce) and unconceivably more; must needs be absolutely and every way perfect. Of all which perfections this is the *radical one*, that belongs to this common Cause and Author of all things, that he is *necessarily and only self-subsisting*. For if this high Privilege in point of Being had been wanting, nothing at all had ever been. Therefore we attribute to God the greatest thing that can be said or thought, (and not what is wholly divers from all other perfection, but which contains all others in it) when we affirm of him that *he is necessarily of himself*. For, tho

tho' when we have bewildered and lost our selves (as we soon may) in the contemplation of this amazing subject, we readily indulge our wearied minds the ease and liberty of resolving this high excellency of *self or necessary existence* in to a meer negation, and say that we mean by it nothing else, than that he was not *from another* : Yet surely, if we would take some pains with our selves, and keep our slothful shifting thoughts to some exercise in this matter ; though we can never comprehend that vast fullness of perfection which is imported in it (for it were not what we plead for, if we could comprehend it.) Yet we should soon see and confess, that it contains unspeakably *more than a negation*, even some great thing that is so much beyond our thoughts, that we shall reckon we have said but a little in saying we cannot conceive it. And that, when we have stretcht our understandings to the utmost of their line, and measure, though we may suppose our selves to have conceived a great deal, there is infinitely more that we conceive not.

Wherefore that is a sober, and most important truth which is occasionally drawn forth (as is supposed) from the  
so

Ad ob. in  
Med. resp.  
quarta.

so admired *D. Cartes*, by the urgent objections of his very acute (friendly) adversary, *That the inexhaustible power of God is the reason for which he needed no cause; And that since that unexhausted power, or the immensity of his essence is most highly positive*, therefore he may be said to be of himself positively, *i. e.* not as if he did ever by any positive efficiency cause himself (which is most manifestly impossible) but that the positive excellency of his own being was such, as could never need, nor admit of, *being caused*.

Of the Essence and Attributes of God.

And that seems highly rational (which is so largely insisted on by Doctor *Jackson* and divers others) that what is without *cause* must also be without *limit* of being. Because all limitation proceeds from the cause of a thing, which imparted to it so much and no more; which argument, though it seem neglected by *Des Cartes*, and is opposed by his Antagonist: Yet I cannot but judge that the longer one meditates, the less he shall understand, how any thing can be limited *ad intra* or from it self, &c. As the Author of the *Tentam. Phys. Theol.* speaks.

But that we may entertain our selves with some more particular considerations of

of *this necessary Being* ; which may evince that general assertion of *its absolute plenitude or fulness of essence*. It appears to be such.

IV. As is, first, at the greatest imaginable distance from non-entity. For what can be at a greater, than that *which is necessarily* ? which signifies as much as *whereto not to be is utterly impossible*. Now an utter impossibility not to be, or the uttermost distance from no Being, seems plainly to imply the absolute plenitude of all Being. And, if here it be said that *to be necessarily*, and *of it self*, needs be understood to import no more than a firm possession of *that being which a thing hath*, be it never so scant or minute a portion of *being*. I answer, it *seems*, indeed, so ; If we measure the signification of this expression, by its first and more obvious appearance. But if you consider the matter more narrowly, you will find here is also signified *the nature and kind of the Being possessed*, as well as the *manner of possession*, viz. that it is a Being of so excellent and noble a kind, as that it can subsist alone, without being beholden : which is so great an excellency, as that it manifestly comprehends  
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all other, or is the foundation of all that can be conceived besides. Which, they that fondly dream of *necessary matter*, not considering unwarily make *one single atom*, a more excellent thing, than the whole frame of heaven and earth. *That* being supposed simply necessary, *this* the meekest piece of hap-hazard, the strangest chance imaginable, and beyond what any, but themselves, could ever have imagined. And which, being considered, would give us to understand, that no *minute* or *finite being*, can be *necessarily*.

And hence we may see what it is to be nearer, or at a further distance from *not-being*.

For these things that came *contingently* into being, or at the pleasure of a *free cause*, have all but a finite, and limited being, whereof some, having a smaller portion of being, than others, approach so much the nearer to not-being. Proportionably, what hath its being *necessarily* and of it self, is at the farthest distance from no-being as comprehending all being in it self. Or, to borrow the expressions, of an elegant Writer, translated into our own Language, "We have much more non-essence than essence; If we have the essence

*Causin.*



“ essence of a man, yet not of the  
“ Heavens, or of Angels. “ We are  
“ confined and limited within a parti-  
“ cular essence, but God *who is what he*  
“ *is* comprehendeth all possible essences.

Nor is this precariously spoken, or,  
as what may be hoped to be granted  
upon courtesie. But let the matter  
be rigidly examined and discussed and  
the certain truth of it will most evi-  
dently appear. For if any thing be, *in*  
*this sense*, remoter than other from no-  
Being, it must either be, *what is neces-*  
*sarily of it self*, or *what is contingently at*  
*the pleasure of the other*. But since no-  
thing is, besides that self-originate ne-  
cessary Being, but what was from it; and  
nothing from it but what was within its  
productive power; it's plain all that,  
with its own Being, was contained in  
it. And therefore, even in that sence,  
it is at the greatest distance from no-Be-  
ing; as comprehending the utmost  
fulness of Being in it self, and conse-  
quently absolute perfection. Which will  
yet further appear, in what follows. We  
therefore add,

V. That necessary Being is most un-  
mixed or *purest Being*. Without allay.  
That is *pure* which is full of it self. *Purity*

O

is

is not here meant in a *corporeal* sense (which few will think) nor in the *moral*; but as with Metaphysicians it signifies *simplicity of essence*. And, in its present use, is more especially intended to signify that simplicity which is opposed to the composition of *act*, and *possibility*. We say then that *necessary Being* imports *purest actuality*. Which is the ultimate and highest perfection of Being. For it signifies *no remaining possibility, yet unreplete*, or not fill'd up, and consequently the fullest exuberancy and entire confluence of all Being, as in its fountain and original source. We need not here look further to evince this than the native import of the very terms themselves; *necessity* and *possibility*; the latter whereof is not so fitly said to be excluded the former (as contingency is) but to be swallowed up of it; as fullness takes up all the space which were otherwise nothing but vacuity or emptiness. It is plain then that necessary Being, ingrosses all possible Being, both that is, and (for the same reason) that ever was so. For nothing can be, or ever was, in possibility to come into Being, but what either must spring, or hath sprung, from the necessary self-subsisting Being.

So

So that unto all *that vast possibility*, a proportionable actuality of *this Being* must be understood to correspond. Else the *other* were *not possible*. For nothing is possible to be produced which is not within the actual productive power of the *necessary Being*. I say within its actual productive power, for if its *power* for such production were not *already actual*, it could never become so, and so were *none at all*. Inasmuch as *necessary being* can never alter, and consequently can never come actually to be, what it, already, is not (upon which account it is truly said, *In æternis posse & esse sunt idem*.) Wherefore in it, is nothing else but *pure actuality*, as profound and vast, as is the utmost possibility of *all created*, or *producible Being*, *i. e.* It can be *nothing other* than it is, but *can do all things* (of which more hereafter.) It therefore stands oppos'd not only (more directly) to *impossibility of Being* (which is the most proper notion of no-Being) but some way, even to *possibility* also; That is the possibility of being any thing but what it is; as being every way compleat, and perfectly full already.

VI Again we might further add, that it is the most *abstracted Being*, or is Being in the very abstract. A thing much insisted on by some of the Schoolmen. And the *notion* which, with much obscurity they pursue (after their manner) may carry some such sense as this (if it may, throughout, be called sense) That whereas no *created nature* is capable of any other, than meer *mental abstraction*, but *exists*, always, in *concretion*, with some subject, that, be it never so refined, is grosser, and less perfect than it self; so that we can distinguish the mentally *abstracted essence*, and the *thing* which *hath that essence*; by which *concretion* essence is limited, and is only the *particular essence* of *this* or *that* thing, which hath or possesses that essence. The *necessary Being* is, in strict propriety, not so truly said to *have essence*, as to *be it*; and exist separately by it self; not as limited to this or that thing. Whence it is, in it self *universal essence*, containing therefore (not formally, but eminently) the being of all things in perfect simplicity. Whence all its own attributes are capable of being affirmed of it in the abstract, \* that it is Wisdom, Power, Goodness; and not only *hath these*, and that *upon this* account,

\* To  
which  
purpose  
we may  
take no-  
tice of the

account, it is a Being, which is necessarily, and of it self. For that which is necessarily and of it self, is not whatsoever it is by the accession of any thing to it self; whereof necessary Being is incapable. But by its own *simple*, and *unvariable essence*. Other Being is upon such terms powerful, wise, yea, and existent, as that it may cease to be so. Whereas to *necessary Being*, it is manifestly repugnant, and, impossible either simply not to be, or to be any thing else, but *what* and *as* it is. And tho' other things may have properties belonging to their essence not separable from it, yet they are not their very essence it self: And, whereas they are in a possibility to lose their very existence, the knot and ligament of whatsoever is most intimate to their actual being, all then falls from them together: Here essence, properties, and existence are all one simple thing that can never cease, decay, or change, because the whole being is *necessary*. Now, all this being supposed, of the force of that form of speech, when we affirm any thing *in the abstract* of another, we may admit the common sense of men to be the interpreter. For every body can tell (though they do not know the

words of one, nor the less worthy to be named, for not being reckoned of that forementioned order. *Si enim denominative de eo quippiam predicaretur abstraheretur ab ipso, tum aliud ab ipso, tum ipso prius. Quod sane impium est, quare neque ens est sed essentia, neque bonus sed bonitas est.* Jul. Scal. Exerc. 365.



meaning of the word *abstract*) what we intend when we use that phrase or manner of speaking. As when we say, by way of hyperbolical commendation, such a man is not only learned, but learning it self; or he not only hath much of Virtue, Justice, and Goodness in him, but he is Virtue, Justice, and Goodness it self (as was once said of an excellent Pagan *Virtuoso* that I may borrow leave to use that word in the moral sense) every one knows the phrase intends the appropriating all Learning, Virtue, Justice, Goodness to such a one. Which, because they know unappropriable to any man, they easily understand it to be, in such a case, a rhetorical strain, and form of speech.

† Καὶ αὐτὸ  
δὲ τὸ εἶναι  
ἐκ τῆς παρὰ  
οὐσίας, καὶ  
αὐτὸς ὅστις  
τὸ εἶναι, καὶ  
ἐκ αὐτοῦ  
εἶναι. καὶ ἐν  
αὐτῷ ὅστις τὸ  
εἶναι, καὶ ἐκ  
αὐτοῦ ὅστις τὸ  
εἶναι, καὶ αὐ-  
τὸν ἔχει τὸ  
εἶναι, καὶ ἐκ  
αὐτοῦ ἔχει  
τὸ εἶναι.  
De Divi-  
nis nomin.  
Co. 5

And yet could not know that, if also they did not understand its proper and native import. And so it may as well be understood what is meant by saying of God, he is being it self. With which sense may be reconciled that of (the so named) *Dionysius the Areopagite* †; That God is not so properly said to be of, or be in, or to have (or partake) of Being, as that it is of him, &c. Inasmuch as he is the pre-existent Being to all Being, *i. e.* If we understand him to mean *all besides his own*, In which sense

sense taking *Being*, for that which is *communicated and imparted*, He may truly be said (as this Author and the Platonists generally speak) \* to be super-essential or super-substantial. But how fitly *being* is taken in that restrained sense we may say more hereafter.

\* *Proclus*  
*in Plat,*  
*Theol. l. 2,*  
*c. 4.*

In the mean time, what hath been said concerning this abstractedness of the necessary *Being*, hath in it some things so unintelligible, and is accompanied with so great (unmentioned) difficulties (which it would give us, perhaps, more labour than profit to discuss) and the absolute perfection of God appears so evidenceable otherwise, by what hath been and may be further said, that we are no way concern'd to lay the stress of the cause on this matter only.

VII. Moreover, *necessary Being* is the *cause* and author of all *Being* besides. Whatsoever is not *necessary*, is *caused*; for not having *Being* of it self, it must be put into *Being* by somewhat else. And inasmuch as there is no middle sort of *Being* betwixt *necessary*, and *not necessary*, and, all that is not necessary is caused, 'tis plain that which is necessary must be the cause of all the

rest. And surely what is the cause of all being besides its own must needs, one way or other contain *its own*, and *all other* in it self; and is, consequently, comprehensive of the utmost fullness of Being. Or is the absolutely perfect Being, (as must equally be acknowledged) unless any one would imagine himself to have got the notice of some perfection, that lies without the compass of all *Being*.

Nor is it an exception worth the mentioning, that there may be a conception of *possible being* or *perfection*, which the *necessary being* hath not caused. For it is, manifestly, as well the *possible cause* of all *possible Being and perfection*, as the *actual cause* of what is *actual*. And what it is possible to it to produce, it hath within its productive power, as hath been said before.

And, if the matter did require it, we might say further, that the *same necessary Being* which hath been the *productive cause*, is, also the *continual root and basis of all Being, which is not necessary*. For what is of it self and cannot, by the special privilege of its own Being, *but be*, needs nothing to sustain it, or needs not trust to any thing besides its own eternal stability.

But

But what is not so, seems to need a continual reproduction every moment, and to be no more capable of continuing in Being by it self, than it was, by it self, of coming into being. For (as is frequently alledged by that so often mentioned Author) since there is no connexion betwixt the present and future time, but what is easily capable of rupture, it is no way consequent that, because I am now, I shall therefore be the next moment further than as the free Author of my Being shall be pleased to continue his own most arbitrary influence, for my support. This seems highly probable to be true, whether that reason signifie any thing or nothing. And that, thence also, continual conservation differs not from creation. Which, whether (as is said by the same Author) it be one of the things that are *manifest by natural light*; or whether a positive act be needless to the annihilation of created things; but only the with-holding of influence, let them examine that apprehend the cause to need it. And if, upon enquiry, they judge it at least evidenceable by natural light to be so, (as I doubt not they will) they will have this further ground upon which thus to reason, That, inas-  
much

much as the necessary Being subsists wholly by it self, and is that whereon all other doth totally depend. It here-upon follows, that it must, some way, contain in it self all Being. We may yet further add,

That the necessary Being we have evinced, though it have caused, and do continually sustain all things, yet doth not, it self, in the meantime suffer any *diminution*. It is not possible, nor consistent with the very terms *necessary Being* that it can. 'Tis true, that if such a thing as a *necessary Atom* were admitted, that would be also undiminishable (it were not else an atom.) But as nothing then can flow from it (as from a perfect parvitude nothing can) so it can effect nothing. (And the reason is the same of many as of one.) Nor would undiminishableness, upon such terms, signify any thing to the magnifying the value of such a trifle.

But this is none of the present case. For our eyes tell us here is a world in being, which we are sure is not it self necessarily; and was therefore made by him that is. And *that*, without *mutation or change* in him; against which the very notion of a necessary Being is most irreconcilably reluctant; and



and therefore without diminution, <sup>Ἐν δὲ παν-</sup>  
 which cannot be conceived without <sup>τῇ τῇ ἡ-  
 εἰα, καὶ δὲ-</sup>  
 change. <sup>εἰα, καὶ δὲ-  
 καὶ ὡς,</sup>

<sup>καὶ δὲ παν-</sup>  
 πᾶσι δὲ νῦν, ἀρχὴν ὄντων, ἀγαθὴ αἰτία, ῥίζαν ψυχῆς καὶ ἐκ χρο-  
 μένων ἀπ' αὐτῆς εἰς τὰ ἐκείνων ἐλαττούμενων. Plotinus *Enn.* 6.1.9.6.9.

Wherefore how inexhaustible a fountain of life, being, and all perfection have we here represented to our thoughts! from whence this vast Universe is sprung, and is continually springing, and that in the mean time, receiving no recruits or foreign supplies, yet suffers no impairment or lessening of it self! What is this but absolute all-fulness! And it is so far from arguing any deficiency or mutability, in his nature, that there is this continual issue of power and virtue from him, that it demonstrates its high excellency that this can be without decay or mutation. For of all this, we are as certain as we can be of any thing: That many things are not necessarily, That the *Being* must be necessary from whence all things else proceed, and that with necessary Being change is inconsistent. It is therefore unreasonable to entertain any doubt *that things are so*, which most evidently appear to be so; only because it is beyond our measure and compass to apprehend, *how they are so.*

*so.* And it would be to doubt (against our own eyes) whether there be any such thing as motion in the world, or composition of bodies, because we cannot give a clear account, (so as to avoid all difficulties, and the entanglement of the common sophisms about them) how these things are performed. In the present case, we have no difficulty but what is to be resolved into the perfection of the Divine Nature, and the imperfection of our own. And how easily conceivable is it, that somewhat may be more perfect, than that we can conceive it. If we cannot conceive the manner of Gods causation of things, or the nature of his causative influence, it only shews their high excellency, and gives us the more ground (since this is that into which both his own revelation, and the reason of things, most naturally lead us to resolve all) to admire the mighty efficacy of his all-creating, and all sustaining *Will* and *Word*; that in that easie unexpensive way by his meer *fiat*, so great things should be performed.

IX. We only say further, That this necessary Being is such to which *nothing can be added*; so as that it should  
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be really greater, or better, or more perfect than it was before. And this not only signifies that nothing can be joyned to it, so as to become a part of it, (which necessary Being, by its natural immutability manifestly refuses.) But we also intend by it, that all things else, with it, contain not more of real perfection than it doth alone. Which (though it carries a difficulty with it that we intend not wholly to overlook when it shall be seasonable to consider it) is a most apparent and demonstrable truth. For it is plain that all being and perfection which is not necessary, proceeds from that which is, as the cause of it. And that no cause could communicate any thing to another which it had not, some way, in it self. Wherefore it is manifestly consequent that all other being was wholly before comprehended in that which is necessary, as having been wholly produced by it. And what is wholly comprehended of another (*i. e.* within its productive power) *before it be produced*, can be no real addition to it, *when it is.*

Now what can be supposed to import fulness of Being and perfection, more than this [impossibility of addition]

on] or that there can be nothing greater or more perfect?

And now these considerations are mentioned without solicitude, whether they be so many exactly distinct heads. For admit that they be not all distinct, but some are involved with others of them; yet the same truth may more powerfully strike some understandings in one form of representation, others in another. And it suffices, that (though not severally) they do together plainly evidence, that the necessary Being includes the absolute entire fulness of all Being and perfection actual and possible within it self.

Having therefore thus dispatcht that former part of this undertaking; the eviction of an *every way perfect Being*, we shall now need to labour little in the other, *viz.*

X. Secondly, the more exprefs deduction of the *infiniteness* and *onliness* thereof.

For as to the former of these it is in effect the same thing that hath been already proved. Since to the *fullest* notion of *infiniteness*, *absolute perfection* seems every way most *fully* to correspond. For absolute perfection includes  
all

all conceivable perfection, leaves nothing excluded. And what doth most simple infiniteness import, but to have nothing for a boundary, or (which is the same) not to be bounded at all?

We intend not now, principally, infiniteness *extrinsically* considered, with respect to *time* and *place*, as to be *eternal* and *immense* do import: But *intrinsically*, as importing bottomless profundity of essence, and the full confluence of all kinds and degrees of perfection without bound or limit. This is the same with *absolute perfection*. Which yet, if any should suspect not to be so, They might, however, easily and expressly prove it of *the necessary Being* upon the same grounds that have been already alledged for proof of *that*.

As that the necessary Being hath *actuality* answerable to the utmost *possibility* of the creature; That it is the only root and cause of all other Being. The *actual cause* of whatsoever is *actually*; The *possible cause* of whatsoever is *possible* to be. Which is most apparently true. And hath been evidenced to be so, by what hath been said, so lately, as that it needs not be repeated. That is, in short, that *nothing* that is not *necessarily*, and of it self, could ever have



have been or can be, but as it hath been or shall be put into Being by that which is *necessarily*, and *of it self*. So that this is as apparent as that *any thing is, or can be*.

But now let sober reason judge, whether there can be any bounds or limits set to the *possibility* of *producible Being*; either in respect of *kinds, numbers, or degrees of perfection*? Who can say or think, when there can be so *many sorts* of creatures produced (or at least *individuals* of those *sorts*) that there can be no more? Or that *any creature* is so *perfect* as that *none* can be made *more perfect*? which indeed, to suppose, were to suppose an *actual infiniteness* in the creature. And then it being, *however*, still, but somewhat that is created or made, how can its *Maker* but be *infinite*? For surely no body will be so absurd, as to imagine an *infinite effect* of a *finite cause*.

Either therefore the creature is (or sometime may be actually made) so perfect that it cannot be more perfect, *or not*. If *not*, we have our purpose; that there is an *infinite possibility* on the part of the creature, always *unreplete*; and consequently, a proportionable *infinite actuality of power*, on the *Creators* part. *Infinite power,*

power, I say, otherwise there were not that (acknowledged) *infinite possibility* of producible being. For nothing is *producible*, that *no power can produce*, be the *intrinsic possibility* of it (or its not-implying *in it self*, a contradiction that it should exist) what it will. And I say *infinite actual power*, because the Creator, being *what he is necessarily*, what power he hath not *actually*, he can never have, as was argued before.

But if it be said, the creature either *is*, or *may* sometime *be actually* so perfect as that it cannot be more perfect. That, as was said, will suppose it *then actually infinite*; and therefore much more that its *cause* is so. And therefore *in this way*, our present purpose would be gained also.

But we have no mind to gain it this *latter way*, as we have no need. 'Tis in it self plain, to any one that considers, that this possibility on the creatures part can never *actually be filled up*; That it is a *bottomless abyss*, in which our thoughts may still, gradually, go down deeper, and deeper, without end: that is, that still, *more* might be produced, or *more perfect* creatures, and still *more*, everlastingly without any bound, which sufficiently infers what we aim at, that

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the Creators *actual power* is proportionable.

And indeed *the supposition of the former*, can neither consist with the *Creators perfection*, nor with *the imperfection of the creature*, it would infer that the *Creators productive power* might be exhausted; that he could do no more, and so place an *actual boundary* to him, and make *him finite*. It were to make the creature actually *full of being*, that it could receive no more, and so would make that *infinite*.

But it may be said, since *all power* is in order to *act*, and the very *notion of possibility* imports that such a thing, of which it is said, may, some time, be *actual*; it seems very unreasonable to say, that the *infinite power of a cause* cannot produce an *infinite effect*. Or that *infinite possibility* can never become *infinite actuality*. For that were to say, and *unsay* the same thing, of the same. To affirm *omnipotency*, and *impotency* of the same cause; *possibility* and *impossibility* of the same effect.

How urgent soever *this difficulty* may seem there needs nothing but *patience*, and *attentive consideration* to disentangle our selves, and get through it. For if we will but allow our selves the leasure

to

to consider, we shall find that [*power*] and [*possibility*] must here be taken not *simply*, and *abstractly*, but as each of them is in conjunction with [*infinite*.] And what is [*infinite*.] but [that which can never be travell'd through] or where-  
of *no end* can be ever arriv'd unto? Now suppose *infinite power*, had produced all that it could produce, it were no longer *infinite* there were an *end* of it, (*i. e.* it had found *limits* and a *boundary* beyond which it could not go.) If *infinite possibility* were filled up, there were an end of that also; and so *neither* were *infinite*.

It may then be further urged, that there is therefore, no such thing as *infinite power*, or *possibility*. For how is *that cause* said to have *infinite power*, which can never produce its *proportionable effect*, or *that effect* have *infinite possibility*, which can never be produced? It would follow then that *power* and *possibility* which are said to be *infinite*, are neither *power*, nor *possibility*; and that *infinite*, must be rejected as a *notion* either repugnant to it self, or to *any thing* unto which we shall go about to affix it.

I answer, it only follows, *They are neither power or possibility, whereof there*

is any bound or end ; or that can ever be gone through. And how absurd is it that they shall be said (as they cannot but be) to be both *very vast*, if they were *finite* ; and *none at all*, for no other reason but their *being infinite* ! And for the pretended repugnancy of the *very notion* of *infinite*, it is plain, that, though it cannot be, to us, *distinctly* comprehensible, yet it is *no more repugnant*, than the notion of *finiteness*. Nor when we have conceived of *power*, in the general, and in our own thoughts *set bounds* to it, and made it *finite*, is it a greater difficulty, (nay, they that try will find it *much easier*) again to *think away* these *bounds*, and make it infinite ? And let them that judge the *notion* of *infiniteness*, inconsistent, therefore reject it if they can. They will feel it re-imposing it self upon them, whether they will or no ; and sticking as close to their minds as their very *thinking power*, it self. And who was, therefore, ever heard of, that did not acknowledge some or other *infinite* ? Even the *Epicureans* themselves though they confined *their Gods*, they did not the *universe*. Which, also, though some *Peripatetique* Atheists made *finite*, in respect of *place*, yet in *duration* they made



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made it *infinite*. Though the *notion* of an *eternal world* is incumbred, with such absurdities, and impossibilities, as whereof there is not the least shadow, in *that*, of an *every way infinite Deity*.

Briefly, it consists not with the nature of a *contingent* being, to be *infinite*. For what is upon such terms, only, in being, is reducible to nothing, at the will and pleasure of its maker; but 'tis a manifest repugnancy, that what is at the *utmost distance from nothing* (as *infinite fulness of being*, cannot but be) should be reducible *thither*.

Therefore *actual infinity* cannot but be the peculiar privilege of that which is *necessarily*.

Yet may we not say, that it is not *within* the compass of *infinite power* to make a creature that *may be infinite*. For it argues not *want of power* that *this* is never to be done, but a still, *infinitely abounding surplussage of it*, that can never be drained, or drawn dry. Nor, that the thing it self is *simply impossible*. It may be (as is compendiously exprest by that most succinct and polite Writer, D. Boyle) *in fieri*, not *in facto esse*. That is, it might be a thing always *in doing*, but *never done*, Because it belongs to the *infinite perfection of God*, that his

Now Bishop of  
Clogher in  
his Contem-  
plat.  
Metaphys.

power be never *actually exhausted*; and to the *infinite imperfection* of the creature, that its *possibility*, or *capacity* be never filled up. To the *necessary* self-subsisting being, to be always *full*, and communicative, to the communicated *contingent* Being, to be ever *empty* and *craving*. One may be said to have *that*, some way, in *his power*, not only which he can do *presently*, all at once, but which he can do by *degrees*, and supposing he have *sufficient time*. So a man may be reckoned able to do that, as the uttermost, *adequate* effect of his *whole* power, which it is only possible to him to have effected, with the expiration of his *life-time*. Gods measure is *eternity*. What if we say then, this is a work possible to be accomplished, even as the *ultimate*, proportionable issue of *Divine Power* (if it were his will, upon which all contingent being depends,) that the creature should be ever growing in the *mean while* and be absolutely perfect at the expiration of eternity? If then, you be good at suppositions, suppose *that* expired, and this *work finished*, both together.

Wherefore if you ask, why *can* the work of making *created being infinite*, never be done? The answer will be, because

because eternity (in every imaginable instant whereof, the inexhaustible power of God can, if he will, be still adding either *more creatures*, or *more perfection* to a creature ) can never be at an end.

We might further argue the *Infinity* of the *necessary Being*, from what hath been said of its *undiminisshableness*, by all its vast communications. Its *impos-* For how-  
soever  
disputable  
it may be,  
whether  
whatso-  
ever is in-  
finite can  
have no-  
thing ad-  
ded to it ;  
yet it is  
without  
dispute,  
that what-  
soever is  
so full as  
that no-  
thing can  
be added  
to it is in-  
finite,  
*sibility* to receive any *accesstion* to it self, by any its (so great productions) both which are plainly demonstrable (as we have seen) of the *necessary Being*, even as it is such, and do clearly (as any thing can) bespeak *infinity*. But we have thence argued its *absolute perfection*, which so evidently includes the *same* *thing*, that all this *latter labour* might have been spared ; were it not that it is the *Genius* of some persons not to be content that they have the *substance* of a thing said, unless it be also said *in their own terms*. And that the express asserting of Gods *simple infiniteness*, in *those very terms*, is, in that respect, the more requisite, as it is a form of expression more known, and usual.

XII. There are yet some remaining difficulties in the matter we have been discoursing of ; which partly through

the *debility* of our own minds, we cannot but find ; and which partly the *subtilty* of sophistical wits, doth create to us. It will be requisite we have some consideration of, at least, *some* of them ; which we will labour to dispatch with all possible brevity. Leaving those that delight in the sport of tying, and loosing knots, or of weaving snares, wherein cunningly to entangle themselves, to be entertained by the *School-men* ; among whom they may find enough, upon this subject, to give them exercise unto *weariness* ; and (if their minds have any relish of what is more savory,) I may venture to say unto *loathing*.

It may possibly be here said in short ; But what have we all this while been doing ? we have been labouring to prove that *necessary Being* comprehends the *absolute fulness* of all *Being* : And what doth this signifie, but that *all being is necessary* ? That *God is all things*, and so, *that every thing is God*. That we hereby confound the being of a man, yea, of a stone, or whatever we can think of *with one another*, and *all with the Being of God*.

And again, how is it possible there should be an *infinite self-subsisting Being*.  
For

For then how can there be any *finite* ? since such *infinite Being* includes *all Being*, and there can be *nothing beyond all*.

Here therefore it is requisite ; having hitherto only asserted, and endeavoured to evince that, *some way, necessary Being* doth include *all being*, to shew in *what way*. And it is plain it doth not include *all*, in the *same way*. It doth not *so*, include *that which is created by it*, and *depends* on it, as it doth *its own*, which is *uncreated*, and *independent*.

The *one* it includes *as its own*, or rather *as it self* ; the *other*, as what it is, and ever was, within its power to produce. If any better like the terms *formally*, and *virtually* they may serve themselves of them at their own pleasure, which yet, as to many, will but, *more darkly*, speak the *same sense*.

We must here know, the *productive power* of God, terminates not *upon himself*, as if he were, by it, capable of adding any thing to his *own appropriate Being* ; which is (as hath been evinced already) *infinitely full*, and *incapable of addition* ; and is, therefore, all *pure act* : But on the creature, where there is still a *perpetual possibility*, never filled up ; because *Divine power* can never be exhausted,



hausted. And thus all that of Being is *virtually* in him, which, either *having produced*, he doth *totally sustain*, or, not *being produced*, he *can produce*.

Whereupon it is easie to understand, how *necessary being*, may comprehend *all Being*, and yet *all being not be necessary*. It comprehends *all Being*, besides what it *self is*, as *having had*, within the compass of its productive power, *whatsoever hath actually sprung* from it, and *having* within the compass of the *same power*, whatsoever is still *possible to be produced*. Which no more confounds such *produced*, or *producible Being*, with that *necessary being* which is *its cause*; than it confounds *all the effects of humane power*, with *one another*, and with the *being of a man*, to say, that he *virtually comprehended them* (so far as they were producible by him) within his power. And is no wiser an inference from *the former*, than it would be from *this latter*, that an house, a book, and a child are the same thing, with *one another*, and with the person that produced them; because, *so far* as they were produced by him, he had it in his power to *produce them*. And that the effects of *Divine power* are produced thereby, *totally*, whereas those of humane

mane power are produced by it but in *part only*, doth, as to the strength and reasonableness of the argument, nothing alter the case.

And as to the next, that *infinite being* should seem to exclude *all finite*. I confess that such as are so disposed, might *here* even wrangle continually, as they might do about any thing, in which *infiniteness* is concern'd: And yet, therein shew themselves (as *Seneca* I remember speaks in another case) not a whit the more learned, but the more *troublesom*. But if one would make short work of it, and barely deny that *infinite being*, excludes *finite* (as *Scotus* doth little else; \* besides denying the consequence of the argument, by which it was before inforced, *viz.* [that an *infinite body* would exclude a *finite*; for where should the *finite* be, when the *infinite* should fill up all *space*? And therefore by parity of reason, why should not *infinite being* exclude *finite*?] shewing the disparity of the two cases) it would perhaps give them *some trouble* also to prove it. For which way would they go to work? *Infinite self-subsisting Being* includes *all Being*, very true; and therefore, we say, it *includes finite*. And what then? doth it *because it includes*

\* *Distinct.*  
2. Q. 2.  
Q. 1.

cludes it, therefore, *exclude it*? And let the matter be soberly considered; somewhat of *finite being*, and *power* we say (and apprehend do knot or difficulty in the matter) can extend so far as to produce some *proportionable effect*, or can do such and such things. And what, doth it seem likely then, that infinite *being*, and *power* can, therefore, do just nothing? Is it not a reason of mighty force, and confoundingly demonstrative, that an *Agent can do nothing*, or cannot possibly produce any the least thing, only because he is of *infinite power*?

For if there be a *simple inconsistency*, between an *infinite Being*, and a *finite*, that will be the case; that, because the former is *infinite*, therefore it *can produce nothing*. For what it should produce cannot consist with it (*i. e.* even not being *finite*; and then certainly if we could suppose the *effect infinite*, much less.) But what, therefore, is *power the less*, for being *infinite*? or can *infinite power*, even because it is *infinite*, do nothing? what can be said or thought more absurd, or void of sense? Or shall it be said that the *infiniteness of power* is no hindrance, but the *infiniteness of Being*? But how wild an imagination-

gination were that of a *finite being*, that were of *infinite power*? And besides, is *that power* somewhat, or nothing? surely it will not be said it is nothing. Then it is some Being. And if *some power* be *some being*, what then is *infinite power*, is not that *infinite being*? And now, therefore, if *this infinite* can produce *any thing*, which it were a strange madness to deny, it can, at least, produce *some finite thing*. Wherefore ther is no inconsistency between the *infinite*, and *finite beings*? unless we say the *effect produced*, even by being produced, must destroy, or (even infinitely) *impair its cause*! so as to make it cease at least to be infinite! But that also cannot possibly be said of that which is *infinite* and *necessary*; which, as hath been shewn, cannot, by whatsoever productions, suffer any diminution or decay. If here it be further urged. But here is an infinite being now supposed; let, next, be supposed the production of a *finite*. *This* is not the *same* with the *other*; for surely *infinite*, and *finite*, are distinguishable enough, and do even *infinitely differ*. This *finite* is either something or nothing; *nothing* it cannot be said; for it was supposed a *Being*, and *produced*; but  
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the production of *nothing*, is no *production*. It is *somewhat* then; here is therefore an *infinite Being*, and a *finite*, now besides. The *infinite* it was said, cannot be diminished; the *finite*, a *real something*, is added. Is there therefore nothing more of existent Being than there was before this production? It is answered, nothing more than *virtually*, was before; for when we suppose an *infinite Being*, and afterwards a *finite*. *This finite* is not to be lookt upon as emerging or springing up, of it self, out of nothing; or as proceeding from some third thing as *its cause*, but as produced by that *infinite*, or springing out of that, which it could not do, but as being before virtually contained in it. For the infinite produces nothing, which it *could not produce*. And what it *could produce*, was, before, contained in it, as in the *power of its cause*. And to any one that attends, and is not disposed to be quarrelsome, this is as plain, and easie to be understood, as how any *finite thing* may produce *another*, or rather, more plain and easie, because a *finite Agent* doth not *entirely* contain its effect, within it self, or in its own power, as an infinite doth. If yet it be again said, that which is limited



mitted is not infinite, but suppose any finite thing produced into being after a pre-existent infinite, this infinite becomes now limited; for the *being* of the finite, is not *that* of the infinite, each hath its own distinct Being

And it cannot be said of *the one*, it is the *other*; therefore each is limited to it self. I answer; that which was *infinite* becomes not hereby less, than it was; for it hath produced nothing but what was before virtually contained in it, and still is (for it still *totally* sustains the other.) But whatsoever it *actually doth*, it *can do*, or hath within its power: therefore if it were infinite before, and is not now become less, it is still infinite.

Wherefore the true reason why the position of a *finite thing* after a *supposed all-comprehending infinite*, doth, no way, intrench upon or detract from, the others *all-comprehensive infinity*, is, that it was formerly contained, and still is, within the *virtue*, and *power* of the *other*.

It is true, that if we should suppose any thing besides that supposed infinite to be *of its self*, that would infer a limitation of the *former*. Infer, I say, not *cause* it, that is, it would not make  
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it cease to be all-comprehendingly infinite, but it would argue it not to have been so before; and that the supposition of its infinity was a false supposition, because it would then appear, that the former did not comprehend all being any way in it self. Somewhat being now found to be *in Being*, which hath no dependence thereon: whence it would be evident neither can be so. Of which, *some good use* may be made to a further purpose by and by.

Here only we may by the way annex, as a *just corollary*, from the foregoing discourse, that as the supposition of *necessary self-subsisting matter*, was, before, shewn to be a *vain*, it now also appears plainly to be altogether an *impossible* supposition. For since the *necessary self-subsisting Being*, is *infinite*, and *all-comprehensive*; and if *matter* were supposed *necessary*; we must have another *necessary being* to form the world, inasmuch as matter is not *self-active*, much less *intelligent* (as it hath both been proved *it cannot be*, and that the *Former* of this world *must be*.) It is therefore out of question, that because *both* cannot be all-comprehensive, they cannot both be *necessary*; Nor can the  
vastly

vastly *different kinds*, or *natures* of these things solve the business ; for be they of what kinds they will, they are still *Beings*. Besides, if *matter* were *necessary*, and *self-subsisting* ; every particle of it must be so. And then we shall have not only *two*, but an *infinite number* of such *infinities*, and all of the *same kind*. But *Being*, only of *this*, or *that sort* (as is apparent where *more sorts* do exist than *one*) could not be *simply infinite*, except as the *other* depends thereon ; and as *this one* is, radically, comprehensive of all the rest, that can come under the general, and most common notion of *Being*. For that there is some general notion, wherein all being agrees, and by which it differs from no being, is, I think, little to be doubted ; how unequally soever, and dependently, the one upon the other, the distinct sorts do partake therein. Whereupon the expressions [*super-essential*] and others like it, spoken of God, must be understood, as rhetorical strains, importing more *reverence*, than *rigid truth*. Except by essence (as was formerly said) only that which is *created* be meant. And that only a *purser*, and *more noble kind* of essence were intend-

\* And we ed to be asserted to him, \* which yet  
 must suppose seems also unwarrantable, and injuri-  
 somewhat ous, that a word of that import, should  
 agreeable be so misapplied and transferr'd *from the*  
 to this to *substance*, to signifie nothing but the  
 be, *Plotinus* his *shadow*, rather, *of Being*. And that  
 meaning they who would seem zealously con-  
 denies cern'd to appropriate *all Being* unto  
 know- God, should, in the height of their  
 ledge to transport, so far forget themselves, as  
 be in God, and to set him above *all being*, and so deny  
 yet also him *any at all*. For surely that which  
 denies simply is above *all being*, is *no being*.  
 that there is in him  
 any igno-  
 rance, that is that he means his intelligence is of an infinitely  
 distinct and more excellent sort from that which he causes in  
 us, as appears by his annexed reason, τὸ δὲ πάντων ἄκρον, ἔστιν  
 ἑστὶν ἐκείνων, *Enn. 6. l. 9. c. 6.*

XIII. And as to the *unity* or *oneliness*  
 rather of this being (or of the God-  
 head) the deduction thereof seems  
 plain and easie from what hath been al-  
 ready proved; that is from the *absolute*  
*perfection* thereof. For though some  
 do toil themselves much about this mat-  
 ter; and others plainly conclude that  
 it is not to be proved at all in a *rati-*  
*onal way*, but only by *divine revelation*.  
 Yet I conceive, they that follow the  
 method (having proved some *necessary*  
*self-*

*self subsisting being*, the root and original spring of all *Being*, and *perfection*, *actual*, and *possible*; which is as plain as any thing can be) of deducing *from thence*, the absolute all comprehending perfection of such *necessary being*, will find their work as good as done. For nothing seems more evident, than that there cannot be *two* (much less *more*) *such Beings*. Inasmuch as *one* comprehends in it self all being and perfection; for there can be but *one all*, without which is *nothing*. So that, one such being supposed, another can have nothing remaining to it. Yea so far is it therefore, if we suppose one *infinite*, and *absolutely perfect being*, that there can be *another*, independent thereon (and of a *depending infinity*, we need not say more than we have, which if any such could be, cannot possibly be a *distinct God*) that there cannot be the minuteest, *finite* thing, imaginable, which that supposed *infinity* doth not comprehend, or that can stand apart from it, on any distinct basis of its own. And that this matter may be left, as plain as we can make it; supposing it already most evident.

That there is, *actually existing*, an *absolute entire fulness* of, Wisdom, Pow-



er, and so, of all other perfection.

That such absolute *entire fulness* of perfection, is infinite.

That this *infinite perfection* must have its *primary seat* somewhere.

That its *primary, original seat* can be no where, but in *necessary self-subsisting Being*.

We hereupon add, that if we suppose *multitude*, or any plurality of necessary self-originate Beings, concurring to make up the seat or subject of this infinite perfection. *Each one* must either be of *finite*, and *partial* perfection; or *infinite*, and *absolute*. *Infinite*, and *absolute* it cannot be, because *one*, *self-originate infinitely*, and *absolutely perfect being*, will *necessarily* comprehend all perfection, and leave nothing to *the rest*. Nor *finite*, because *many finites* can never make *one infinite*; much less, can many broken parcels, or fragments of perfection, ever make *infinite*, and *absolute* perfection: Even though their number (if that were possible) were infinite. For the perfection of *unity*, would still be wanting, and their *communication*, and concurrence to *any work* (even such as we see *is done*) be infinitely imperfect, and impossible.

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We might, more at large, and with a (much more pompous) number, and *apparatus*, of arguments, have shewn, that there *can be no more Gods than one*. But to such as had rather be informed, than bewildered, and lost ; clear proof that is *shorter*, and *more comprehensive*, will be more grateful.

Nor doth this proof of the *unity* of the God-head any way impugn the *Trinity*, which is by Christians believed, therein (and whereof *some Heathens*, as is known, have not been wholly without some apprehension, however they came by it) or exclude a sufficient, *uncreated ground* of *Trinal distinction*. As would be seen, if that great difference of Beings *necessary* and *contingent* be well stated ; and what is by *eternal, necessary emanation* of the *Divine Nature*, be duly distinguished from the arbitrary, products of the *Divine Will*. And the matter be thoroughly examined, whether, herein be not a sufficient distinction of that which is *increated*, and that which is *created*. In this way it is possible it might be cleared, how a *Trinity*, in the God-head, *may be* very consistently, with the *unity* thereof. But *that it is*, we cannot know, but by his telling us so. It being among the *many things*

of God, which are not to be known, but by the Spirit of God revealing, and testifying them, in and according to the holy Scriptures. As the things of a man, are not known but by the spirit of a man. And what further evidence we may justly and reasonably take from those Scriptures, even in reference to some of the things, hitherto discoursed, may be hereafter shewn.

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## C H A P. V.

*Demands in reference to what hath been hitherto discoursed, with some reasonings thereupon: 1. Is it possible, that, upon supposition of This Beings existence, it may be, in any way sutable to our present state, made known to us that it doth exist? Proved 1. That it may. 2. That, since any other fit way, that can be thought on, is as much liable to exception as that we have already: This must be, therefore, sufficient. Strong Impressions. Glorious Apparitions. Terrible Voices. Surprising Transformations. If these necessary. Is it needful they be universal? Frequent?*

*If*

*If not, more rare things of this sort, not wanting.*

2 Demand. Can Subjects, remote from their Prince, sufficiently be assured of his existence?

3 Demand. Can we be sure there are men on earth?

I. **A**ND if any should in the mean time, still remain either *doubtful*, or *apt to cavil*, after all that hath been said, for proof of *that Beings existence*, which we have described, I would only add these few things, by way of enquiry or demand, *viz.*

First, Do they believe, *upon supposition of the existence of such a Being*, that it is possible it may be made known to us, in our present state and circumstances, by means not unsuitable thereto, or inconvenient to the order and government of the world, that it doth exist? It were strange to say or suppose, that a Being of so high perfection as this we have hitherto given an account of, *if he is*, cannot in any *fit way*, make it known *that he is*, to an intelligent, and apprehensive sort of creatures.

*If*, indeed, *he is*; and be the common Cause, Author and Lord of us, and all things (which we do now but suppose.

pose. And we may defie cavil to alledge any thing, that is so much as colourable, *against the possibility* of the supposition) surely he hath done greater things than the making of it known *that he is*. It is no unapprehensible thing: There hath been *no inconsistent notion* hitherto given of him. Nothing said concerning him; but will well admit that it is possible such a Being may be now existent. Yea we not only can conceive, but we actually have (and cannot but have) *some conception*, of the several attributes we have ascribed to him; so as to apply them (severally) to somewhat else, if we will not apply them (joyntly) to him. We cannot but admit there is *some eternal necessary being*; somewhat that is *of it self active*; somewhat that is *powerful, wise and good*. And *these notions* have in them *no repugnancy to one another*; wherefore it is not impossible they may meet, and agree together, in full perfection to one and the same *existent being*. And hence it is manifestly no unapprehensible thing, *that such a Being doth exist*. Now supposing, that it doth exist, and hath been to us the cause and Author of our Being; hath given us the reasonable, intelligent nature which we find



find our selves possessors of; and that very power whereby we apprehend the existence of such a Being as he *is to be possible* (all which we for the present do still but suppose) while also his actual existence is not unapprehensible, were it not the greatest madness imaginable to say, that *if he do exist*, he cannot also make our apprehensive nature understand this apprehensible thing that he *doth exist*? We will therefore take it for granted, and as a thing which no man well in his wits will deny, *that upon supposition such a Being, the Cause and Author of all things do exist*, he might, in some convenient way or other, with sufficient evidence, make it known to such creatures as we, so as to beget in us a rational certainty *that he doth exist*.

Upon which presumed ground we will only reason thus or assume to it; *That there is no possible, and fit way of doing it; which is not liable to as much exception, as the evidence we already have.* Whence it will be consequent, that if the thing be possible to be fitly done, it is done already. That is, that if we can apprehend, how it may be possible such a Being, actually existent, might give us that evidence of his existence  
that

that should be futable to our present state, and fufficient to out-weigh all objections to the contrary ( without which it were not rationally fufficient ) And that we can apprehend *no poffible way* of doing this, which will not be liable to the fame, or equal objections, as may be made againft the present means we have for the begetting of this certainty in us, then we have already fufficient evidence of this Beings exiftence. That is fuch as ought to prevail againft all objections, and obtain our affent *that it doth exift.*

*Here* it is only needful to be confidered what ways can be thought of, which we will fay might *affure us* in this matter, that we already *have not.* And what might be objected againft them, *equally,* as againft the means we *now have.*

II. Will we fay *such a Being,* if he did actually exift, might ascertain us of his exiftence, *by fome powerful impreffion of that truth upon our minds ?*

We will not infift, what there is of this already. Let them confider who gainfay, what they can find of it in their own minds. And whether they are not engaged by their *Atheiftical inclinations*

tions in a contention *against themselves*, and their *more natural* sentiments? From which they find it a matter of no small difficulty to be delivered? It was not for nothing, that even *Epicurus* himself calls this of *an existing Deity*, a *Proleptical Notion*. But you may say, the impression might have been *simply universal*, and *so irresistible*, as to prevent or overbear all doubt, or inclination to doubt.

And, first, for the *universality* of it, why may we not suppose it already *sufficiently universal*? As hath been heretofore alledged. With what confidence can the few dissenting Atheists, that have professed to be of another persuasion, put that value upon themselves, as to reckon *their dissent* considerable enough to implead the universality of this impression! Or what doth it signify more to that purpose, than some *few instances* may do, of persons so stupidly foolish, as to give much less discovery of any rational faculty, than *some beasts*; to the impugning the *universal rationality* of mankind?

Besides that, *your contrary profession* is no sufficient argument of your *contrary persuasion*, much less, that you *never had* any stamp or impression of *a Deity* upon your minds, or that you have quite  
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*raz'd it out.* It is much to be suspected that you hold not *your contrary persuasion*, with that unshaken confidence, and freedom from all fearful and suspicious mis-givings, as that you have much more reason to brag of your dis-belief *for the strength*, than you have for the *goodness of it*. And that you have those qualmish fits, which bewray the impression (at least to your own notice and reflection, if you would but allow your selves the liberty of so much converse with your selves) that *you will not confess*, and yet *cannot utterly deface*.

But if in this you had quite won the day, and were masters of your design; were it not pretty to suppose that the *common consent of mankind* would be a good argument of the existence of a Deity except only that it wants your concurrence! If it were *so universal*, as to include your vote and suffrage, it would then be a firm, and solid Argument (as no doubt it is, *without you*, a stronger one than you can answer) but when you have made a hard shift to withdraw your assent, you have undone the *Deity*, and *Religion*! Doth this cause stand and fall with you? Unto which you can contribute about as much as the *fly* to the *triumph*! was that true before,

before, which now your hard-laboured dissent, hath made false ?

But if this impression were simply universal, so as also to include you, it matters not what men *would say* or object against it ; (it is to be supposed they would be in no disposition to object any thing.) But what were *to be said* ; or what the case it self, objectively considered, would admit. And though it would not (as now it doth not) admit of any thing to be said *to any purpose* ; yet the *same thing* were still *to be said*, that you *now say*. And if we should but again unsuppose so much of the former supposition, as to imagine that somefew should have made their escape, and disburdened themselves of all apprehensions of God. Would they not with the same impudence as you now do, say that *all Religion* were nothing else but *Enthusiastical Fanaticism* ? And that *all mankind*, besides themselves, were enslaved fools ?

And for the meer *irresistibleness of this impression* ; 'Tis true it would take away all disposition to oppose, but it may be presumed this is none of the *rational evidence* which we suppose you to mean ; when you admit (if you do admit) that, *some way, or other*, the  
exi-



existence of such a Being might be (possibly) made *so evident*, as to induce a *rational certainty* thereof. For to believe such a thing to be true only upon a *strong impulse* (how certain soever the thing be) is not to assent to it *upon a foregoing reason*. Nor can any, in that case, tell *why* they believe it, but *that* they believe it. You will not sure think any thing the truer for this, only, that such and such believe it with a sturdy confidence. 'Tis true that the *universality* and *naturalness* of such a persuasion, as pointing us to a *common cause* thereof, affords the *matter of an argument*, or is a medium not contemptible nor capable of answer, as hath been said before.

But *to be irresistibly captivated into an assent*, is no *medium* at all; but an *immediate persuasion* of the thing it self without a reason.

III. Therefore must it yet be demanded of Atheistical persons, what *means*, that you yet have not, would you think sufficient to have put this matter out of doubt? Will you say, *some kind of very glorious apparitions*, becoming the majesty of such a one as this Being is represented, would have satisfied? But if  
you

you know how to phansie, that such a thing as *the Sun*, and *other luminaries*, might have been compacted of a certain peculiar sort of atoms, coming together of their own accord; without the direction of a *wise Agent*: yea and *consist* so long, and hold so strangely regular motions;

How easie would it be to object *that*, with much advantage, against what any *temporary apparition*, be it as glorious as you can imagine, might seem to signify to this purpose.

Would *dreadful loud voices* proclaiming *him*, to be, of *whose existence* you doubt, have serv'd the turn? It is likely, if your *fear* would have permitted you to use your *wit*, you would have had some subtil invention how, by some odd rancounter of *angry atoms*, the air or clouds, might become thus *terribly vocal*. And when you know *already*, that they do sometimes salute your ears with very loud sounds (as when it thunders) there is little doubt, but your *great wit* can devise a *way*, how, possibly, such sounds might become articulate. And for the sense and coherent import of what were spoken; you that are so good at conjecturing, how things might casually happen,  
would

would not be long in making a guess, that might serve *that turn* also. Except you were grown very dull and barren ; and *that* fancy that served you to imagine how the *whole frame* of the universe : and the rare structure of the bodies of animals, yea and even the reasonable soul it self, might be all *casual productions* , cannot now devise how, by chance, a *few words* (for you do not say you expect *long orations* ) might fall out to be sense, though there were no *intelligent speaker*.

But would *strange and wonderful effects* that might surprise , and amaze you do the business ? we may challenge you to *try your faculty*, and stretch it to the uttermost ; and then tell us, what imagination you have formed of any thing more strange and wonderful, than the *already extant frame of nature*, in the *whole*, and the *several parts* of it. Will he that hath a while considered the composition of the world ; the exact and orderly motions of the Sun, Moon, and Stars ; the fabrick of his own body, and the powers of his soul, expect yet a *wonder*, to prove to him *there is a God*.

But if that be the complexion of your minds, that it is not the *greatness* of  
of

*of any work, but the novelty and surprisingness of it, that will convince you ; It is not rational evidence you seek. Nor is it your reason, but your idle curiosity you would have gratified ; which deserves no more satisfaction than that fond wish, that one might come from the dead to warn men on earth lest they should come into the place of torment.*

And if *such means as these* that have been mentioned, should be thought necessary, I would ask, Are they necessary to *every individual person ?* so as that *no man* shall be esteemed to have had *sufficient means* of conviction, who hath not *with his own eyes*, beheld some such *glorious apparition*; or himself heard some such *terrible voice*, or been the *immediate witness*, or *subject* of some *prodigious wonderful work*? Or will the *once* seeing, hearing, or feeling them suffice? Is it not necessary there should be a *frequent repetition*, and renewal of these amazing things, lest the impression wearing off, there be a relapse, and a gradual sliding into an oblivion, and unapprehensiveness of *that Beings existence*, whereof they had, sometime, received a conviction. Now if such a continual iteration of these strange things were thought necessary, would they not hereby soon cease to

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be strange? And then if their *strangeness* was *necessary*, by *that very thing*, wherein their *sufficiency* for conviction, is said to consist, they should become *useless*. Or if by their *frequent variations* (which it is possible to suppose) a perpetual amusement be still kept up in the minds of men: and they be always full of *consternation*, and *wonder*. Doth this temper so much befriend the *exercise of Reason*? or contribute to the sober consideration of things? As if men could not be *rational*, without being *half mad*! And indeed they might soon become altogether so, by being, but a while, beset with objects so full of terror, as are, *by this supposition*, made the *necessary means* to convince them of a *Deity*. \* And were this a

\* Now were not that a most improper course and unsuitable to the nature of man that should rather tend to destroy his reason or judgment than convince it?

*fit means* of ruling the world, of preserving order, among mankind? what business could then be followed? who could intend the affairs of their callings? who could either be capable of *governing*, or of *being governed*, while all mens minds should be wholly taken up, either in the *amazed view* or the *suspenceful expectation*, of nought else but *strange things*? To which purpose much hath been of late, with so excellent

reason



reason, discoursed by a noted Author, that it is needless *here* to say more. And the aspect and influence of this state of things would be *most pernicious* upon Religion; that should be *most* served thereby. And which requires the greatest severity, and most peaceful composition of mind, to the due managing the exercises of it. How little would *that* contribute to pious, and devout, converses with God, that should *certainly* keep mens minds in a continual commotion and hurry? *This course*, as our present condition is, what could it do but craze mens understandings, as a too bright, and dazling light causeth blindness, or any over-excelling sensible object destroys the sense; so that we should soon have cause to apply the *Erpen. Proverb*, *Shut the windows that the house may be light*. And might learn to put a sense, not intolerable, upon those passages of some mystical Writers † that God is to be seen in a *Divine cloud or darkness*, as one \*; and with closed eyes, as another || speaks (tho' what was their very sense I will not pretend to tell.)

Dr. Spencer of Prodigies. A Discourse which tho' it disproves not, the reality, or true significancy of such portents, yet aptly tends to prevent, or correct the ill use of them.

† D. Areop. l. de myster. Theol. c. 1. Τις ο δεικνυμενος ος γινωσκει. || Procl. in Plat. Theol. μυστικας ενεδεικνυμεναι την αγνωστω και κρυπτω των οντων ενδει.

Besides that, by this means, there would naturally ensue, the continual excitation of so vexatious, and enthral-

ing passions, so servile and tormenting fears and amazements; as could not but hold the souls of men under a constant, and comfortless restraint, from any free and ingenuous access to God, or conversation with him. Wherein the *very life of Religion* consists. And then, to what purpose doth the discovery, and acknowledgment of the Deity serve? Inasmuch as it is never to be thought that the *existence of God* is a thing to be known, only that it may be known. But that the end it serves for is *Religion*. A complacential, and chearful adoration of him, and application of our selves, with, at once, both dutiful, and pleasant, affections towards him. That were a *strange means* of coming to know that he is, that should only tend to *destroy, or hinder the very end it self, of that knowledge.*

Wherefore all this being considered, it is likely it would not be insisted upon as necessary to our being perswaded of Gods existence, that he should so multiply strange and astonishing things, as that *every man*, might be a daily, amazed, beholder, and witness of them.

V. And if their *frequency*, and constant iteration be acknowledged *not necessary,*

cessary, but shall indeed be judged *wholly inconvenient*; more rare discoveries of him, in the very ways we have been speaking of, have not been wanting. What would we think of such an appearance of God as that was upon *Mount Sinai*? when he came down (or caused a sensible *Glory* to descend) in the sight of all that great people! wherein the several things concurred that were above-mentioned! Let us but suppose such an appearance, in all the concurrent circumstances of it, as that is said to have been. That is, we will suppose an *equally* great assembly, or multitude of people is gathered together, and a *solemn forewarning* is given, and proclaimed among them, by appointed *Heraulds* or *Officers of State*, that, on such a prefixed day, now very nigh at hand, the *Divine Majesty* and *Glory* (even *his Glory set in Majesty*) will visibly appear, and shew it self to them. They are most severely enjoined to prepare themselves, and be in readiness against *that day*. Great care is taken to sanctifie the *people*, and the *place*. Bounds are set about the designed *Theater* of this *great appearance*. All are strictly required to observe their due, and awefuld instances, and abstain from

more audacious approaches, and gazings; lest that terrible glory break out upon them, and they perish. An irreverent or disrespectful look, they are told, will be mortal to them, or a *very touch* of any part of this *sacred inclosure*. In the morning of the appointed day, there are thunders, and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the *hallowed Mount*. The exceeding loud sound of *Trumpet proclaims* the Lords descent. He descends in fire, the flames whereof envelope the trembling Mount (now floored with a *Saphyr pavement*, clear as the body of heaven.) And ascend into the middle region or (as it is expressed) into the midst, or *heart* of the heavens. The *voice of words* (a loud and dreadful voice) audible to all that mighty Assembly, in which were 60000 *men* (probably more than a million of *persons*) issues forth from amidst that terrible glory pronouncing to them that *I am Jehovah thy God*.----And thence proceeding to give them precepts so plain and clear, so comprehensive, and full, so unexceptionably just and righteous, so agreeable to the *nature of man*, and subservient to his good; that nothing could be more worthy the *great Creator*, or more aptly suitable to such a *sort of creatures*. It

It is very likely, indeed, that such a demonstration would leave no *spectator* in doubt, concerning *the existence of God*; and would puzzle the *Philosophy* of the most *sceptical Atheist* to give an account, otherwise, of the *Phænomenon*. And if such could devise to say any thing that should seem plausible to some very easie half-witted persons, that *were not present*, they would have a hard task of it to quiet the minds of those *that were*; or make them believe this was nothing else, but some odd conjuncture of certain *fiery atoms*, that, by some strange accident, happened into this occursion and conflict with one another; or some illusion of phansie, by which so great a multitude were, all at once, imposed upon. So as that they only seemed to themselves to hear, and see, what they heard, and saw not. Nor is it likely they would be *very confident* of the truth of their *own conjecture*; or be apt to venture much upon it *themselves*; having been the *eye, and ear-witnesses* of these things.

But is it *necessary* this course shall be taken to make the world know there is a God? such *an appearance*, indeed, would more powerfully *strike sense*; but unto sober, and considerate *Reason*



were it a greater thing than the making such a world as this? And the disposing this great variety of particular Beings in it, into so exact, and elegant an order? And the sustaining and preserving it in the same state, through so many ages? Let the vast and unknown extent of the whole, the admirable variety, the elegant shapes, the regular motions, the excellent faculties, and powers of that unconceivable number of creatures contained in it, be considered. And is there *any comparison*, between that *temporary, transient, occasional*, and this *steady, permanent, and universal discovery* of God? Nor (supposing the truth of the History) can it be thought the design of this appearance to *these Hebrews*, was to convince them of the *existence of a Deity*, to be worshipped; when, both, they had so convincing evidence thereof many ways *before*; and the *other Nations*, *that*, which they left, and *those* whither they went, were not without *their Religion, and Worship*, such as it was. But to engage them by so *majestick a representation* thereof, to a more *exact observance* of his *will*, now made known. Though, had there been any doubt of the *former* (as we can hardly suppose they could, before, have more doubted of the

the

the being of a God, than that there were men on earth) this might *collaterally*, and *besides its chief intention* be a means to *confirm* them concerning *that also*: But that it was *necessary for that end*, we have no pretence to imagine. The *like* may be said, concerning *other Miracles* heretofore wrought, that the *intent* of them was to justify the *Divine Authority* of him who wrought them, to prove him *sent by God*, and so countenance the *Doctrine*, or *Message* delivered by him. Not that they tended (*otherwise, than on the by*) to prove *Gods existence*. Much less, was this so amazing an appearance *needful*, or *intended for that end*; and least of all, was it *necessary*, that this should be *Gods ordinary way*, of making it known to men *that he doth exist*: So as that, for this purpose, he should often repeat so terrible representations of himself. And how *inconvenient* it were to mortal men, as well as *unnecessary* the *astonishment* wherewith it possessed *that people*, is an evidence. And their passionate affrighted *wish* thereupon, *Let not God any more speak to us, lest we die*. They apprehended it impossible for them to out-live such another sight!

And

And if that so amazing an appearance of the Divine Majesty (sometime afforded) were not *necessary*, but some way, on the bye, *useful*, for the confirming that people in the perswasion of *Gods existence*, why may it not be *useful also*, for the same purpose *even now*, to us? Is it that we think that can be *less true now*, which was so gloriously *evident* to be true, *four thousand years ago*? Or is it that we can *dis-believe*, or *doubt*, the *truth of the History*? what should be the ground, or pretence, of *doubt*? If it were a *fiction*, it is manifest it was feigned by *some person*, that had the *use of his understanding*, and was not besides himself, as the coherence, and contexture of *parts* doth plainly shew. But would any man not besides himself, designing to gain credit to a forged report of a *matter of fact*, ever say there were 600000 persons present at the doing of it? Would it not rather have been pretended done in a corner? Or is it imaginable it should never have met with contradiction? That none of the *pretended* by-standers, should disclaim the avouchment of it? and say they knew of no such matter? Especially if it be considered that *the laws* said to be given at that time; chiefly

ly those which were reported to have been written in the *two Tables*, were not so favourable to *vicious inclinations*, nor that people so strict and scrupulous observers of them. But that they would have been glad to have had any thing to pretend, against the authority of the *legislature*, if the case could have admitted it. When they discovered, in that, and succeeding time, so violently prone, and unretractable a propension to *Idolatry*, and *other wickednesses*, directly against the very letter of that *Law*! How welcome, and cove-  
table a *plea*, had it been, in their *frequent*, and sometimes, *almost universal*, apostasies, could they have had such a thing to pretend, that the *Law it self*, that curbed them was a cheat! But we always find, that though they labour-  
ed, in some of their *degeneracies*, and when they were lapsed into a *more corrupted state*, to render it *more easie* to themselves by favourable glosses, and interpretations. Yet, even in the *most corrupt*, they never went about to deny or implead its *Divine original*; where-  
of they were ever so Religious asser-  
tors, as no people under heaven could be more. And the awful apprehension whereof prevailed so far with them, as  
that

that care was taken (as is notoriously known) by those appointed to *that charge*, that the very *letters* should be numbered of the *sacred Writings*, lest there should happen any the minutest alteration in them. Much more might be said, if it were needful, for the evincing the truth of this *particular piece of History*; and it's little to be doubted but any man who, with sober and impartial reason, considers the circumstances relating to it, the easily evidenceable antiquity of the Records whereof this is a part; The certain nearness of the time of writing them, to the time when this thing is said to have been done; the great reputation of the *Writer* even among *Pagans*; the great multitude of the alledged witnesses, and Spectators; the no-contradiction ever heard of; the universal consent, and suffrage, of that Nation through all times to this day, even when their practice hath been most contrary to *the Laws* then given; the securely confident, and unsuspicious reference of *later pieces* of *sacred Scripture* thereto (even some parts of the *New Testament*) as a most known and undoubted thing; the long *series* and tract of time, through which that people are said to have had *extraordinary*,  
and



and *sensible* indications of the Divine Presence, (which if it had been false, could not in so long a time, but have been evicted of falshood.) Their miraculous, and wonderful eduction out of *Egypt*, not denied by any, and more obscurely acknowledged by some Heathen Writers; their conduct through the Wilderiness, and settlement in *Canaan*; their constitution, and form of Polity, known for many Ages to have been a *Theocracy*; their usual ways of consulting God, upon *all more important* occasions. Whosoever I say shall soberly consider these things (and many more might easily occur to such as would think fit to let their thoughts dwell a while upon this subject) will, not only, from *some* of them, think it *highly improbable*, but, *from others* of them, *plainly impossible* that the history of *this appearance*, should have been a contrived piece of falshood. Yea, and tho' as was said, the view of such a thing, with ones own eyes, would make a more powerful impression upon our *phansie*, or *imagination*; yet, if we speak of *rational evidence* (which is quite another thing) of the truth of a *matter of fact* that were of this astonishing nature, I should think it were as much (at least  
if

if I were *credibly* told that so many hundred thousand persons saw it at once) as if I had been the *single unaccompanied* spectator of it *my self*. Not to say that it were apparently, in some respect, much greater; could we but obtain of our selves to distinguish, between the *pleasing* of our *curiosity*, and the *satisfying* of our *reason*.

So that upon the whole, I see not why it may not be concluded, with the greatest confidence, that both the (supposed) *existence of a Deity*, is *possible* to be certainly known to men on earth, in some way that is *fitable* to their *present state*; that there are *no means fitter to be ordinary*, than those we already have, and that more *extraordinary, additional confirmations* are partly, therefore, not *necessary*, and partly not *wanting*.

VI. Again it may be further demanded (as that which may both immediately serve our main purpose, and may also shew the reasonableness of what was last said,) *Is it sufficiently evident to such Subjects of some great Prince as live remote from the Royal Residence, that there is such a one now ruling over them?*

To

To say *no*, is to raze the foundation of *civil Government*, and reduce it wholly to *domestical*, by such a *Ruler* as may ever be in *present view*. Which yet, is, upon such terms, never possible to be preserved also. It is plain many do firmly enough believe, that there is a *King reigning over them*; who not only never saw the *King*; but never heard any distinct account of the splendor of his Court, the pomp of his attendance; or it may be, never saw the man that had seen the King? And is not all dutiful, and loyal obedience wont to be challenged, and paid of such, as well as his *other* Subjects. Or would it be thought a *reasonable excuse* of disloyalty, that any such persons should say they had never seen the King, or his Court? Or a *reasonable demand*, as the condition of required subjection, that the Court be kept, sometime, in *their Village*, that they might have the opportunity of beholding at least some of the *Insignia* of Regality, or more splendid appearances of that *Majesty*, which claims subjection from them? much more would it be deemed unreasonable, and insolent, that every Subject should expect to see the face of the Prince every day, otherwise they

they will not obey, nor believe there is *any such person*. Whereas it hath been judged, rather, more expedient and serviceable to the continuing the *veneration of Majesty* (and in a Monarchy of no mean reputation for wisdom, and greatness) that the *Prince* did very rarely offer himself to the view of the people. Surely *more ordinary*, and *remote* discoveries of an *existing Prince*, and Ruler over them (the effects of his power, and the influences of his government) will be reckoned sufficient, even as to many parts of his Dominions, that, possibly through many succeeding generations, never had other. And yet how unspeakably less sensible, less immediate, less constant, less necessary, less numerous, are the effects and instances of *regal humane power*, and wisdom, than of the *Divine*; which *latter* we behold, which way soever we look, and feel in every thing we touch, or have any sense of, and may reflect upon, in our *very senses themselves*, and in all the *parts*, and *powers* that belong to us. And so *certainly*, that if we would allow ourselves the liberty of serious thoughts, we might soon find it were utterly impossible *such effects* should ever have been with-

without that *only cause*. That without its influence, it had never been possible, that we could *hear*, or *see*, or *speak*, or *think*, or *live*, or *be any thing*, nor that any other thing, could ever have been, when as the effects that serve so justly to endear and recommend to us *civil Government* (as peace, safety, order, quiet possession of our rights) we cannot but know, are not inseparably, and incommunicably, appropriate, or to be attributed to *the person of this or that particular, and mortal Governour* ; but may also proceed from *another* : yea and the *same benefits* may (for some short time at least) be continued without any *such government at all*. Nor is this intended, meerly as a *rhetorical scheme of speech*, to beguile, or amuse the unwary Reader : But, without arrogating any thing, or attributing more to it, than that it is an (altogether inartificial, and very defective, but) true, and naked representation of the *very case*, it self, as it is. 'Tis professedly propounded as having somewhat solidly argumentative in it. That is, that, (whereas there is most confessedly *sufficient*, yet ) there is unspeakably *less evidence*, to most people in the world, under *civil government* ; that there *act-*  
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*ally is* such a government existent over them; and that they are under obligation to be subject to it; than there is of the *existence of a Deity*, and the (consequent) reasonableness of *Religion*. If therefore the *ordinary effects*, and indications of *the former*, be *sufficient*, which have so *contingent*, and *uncertain* a connexion with *their causes* (while those which are more extraordinary are so exceeding rare with the most) why shall not the more certain ordinary discoveries of *the latter* be judged sufficient, though the most have not the immediate notice of any such extraordinary appearances as those are which have been before mentioned?

VII. Moreover, I yet demand further, *whether it may be thought possible for any one to have a full rational certainty, that another person is a reasonable creature; and hath in him a rational soul, so as to judge, he hath sufficient ground and obligation to converse with him, and carry towards him as a man?* without the supposition of this, the foundation of all humane society and *civil conversation* is taken away. And what evidence have we of it whereunto that which we have of *the being of God* (as the foundation

dation of *religious* and *godly conversation*) will not at least be found equivalent?

Will we say that meer *humane* shape is enough to prove such a one a man? A *Philosopher* would deride us, as the *Stagyrites* Disciples are said to have done the *Platonick man*. But we will not be so nice. We acknowledge it is, if no circumstances concurr (as suddain appearing, vanishing, transformation or the like) that plainly evince the contrary; so far as to infer upon us an obligation, not to be rude, and uncivil; that we use no violence, nor carry our selves abusively towards one, that, *only thus*, appears an *humane creature*. Yea, and to perform any duty of *Justice*, or *Charity*, towards him, within our power, which we owe to a man *as a man*. As suppose we see him *wronged*, or in *necessity*, and can presently *right*, or *relieve* him; though he *do not*, or *cannot* represent to us more of his case, than our own eyes inform us of. And should *an act of Murther* be committed, upon one, whose *true humanity* was not, *otherwise, evident*, would not the offender be justly liable to the known, and common punishment of that offence? Nor could he acquit himself of transgressing the *laws of humanity*, if he

should *only* neglect any seasonable act of *Justice* or *Mercy* towards him, whereof he beholds the *present occasion*.

But if any one were disposed to cavil, or play the *Sophister*; how much more might be said, even by infinite degrees, to oppose *this single evidence* of any ones *true humanity*; than ever was, or can be brought against the *entire concurrent evidence* we have of the *existence of God*. It is, *here*, most manifestly just, and equal, thus to state the case, and compare the *whole evidence* we have of the *latter*, with *that one* of the *former*; Inasmuch as *that one alone*, is apparently enough to oblige us to carry towards such a one *as a man*. And if *that alone* be *sufficient* to oblige us to acts of *Justice*, or *Charity* towards man, he is strangely blind, that cannot see *infinitely more*, to oblige him to acts of *Piety* towards God.

But if we would take a *nearer*, and *more strict* view of *this parallel*; we would state the *general*, and *more obvious* aspect of *this world*, on the *one hand*, and the *external aspect*, and shape of a man *on the other*; and should then see the *former* doth evidence to us an *in-dwelling Deity*, diffused through the whole, and actuating every part, with incom-

incomparably greater certainty; than the latter doth, an *in-dwelling reasonable soul*. In which way we shall find, what will aptly serve our present purpose, though we are far from apprehending any *such union* of the blessed God with *this world*, as is between the *soul* and body of a man. It is manifestly possible, to our *understandings*, that there *may be*, and (if any history or testimony of others be worthy to be believed) *certain to experience and sense*, that there, often, *hath been*, the appearance of *humane shape*, and of *agreeable actions* without a real man. But it is no way possible, *such a world as this* should have ever been *without God*. That *there is a world*, proves that *eternal Being* to exist, whom we *take to be God*; suppose we it as *rude an heap*, as at first it was, or as we can suppose it; as *external appearance* represents to us that creature which we *take to be a man*; But *that*, as a *certain infallible* discovery, necessarily true. *This*, but as a *probable and conjectural* one, and (though highly probable) not impossible to be false.

And if we will yet descend to a more *particular enquiry* into this matter, which way will we fully be ascertain'd that

this *supposed* man is *truly*, and really what *he seems* to be. This we know not how to go about, without recollecting, what is the *differencing notion* we have of a *man*; that he is (*viz.*) a *reasonable living creature*, or a *reasonable soul*, *inhabiting*, and *united with a body*. And how do we think to descry *that*, here, which may answer this common notion we have of a man? Have we any way, besides that discovery, which the *acts*, and *effects* of reason, do make of a *rational* or *intelligent Being*? We will look more narrowly, *i. e.* unto somewhat else than his *external appearance*: and observe the *actions* that proceed from a *more distinguishing principle* in him; that he *reasons*, *discourses*, *doth business*, *pursues designs*; in short he *talks*, and *acts* as a *reasonable creature*. And hence we conclude him to *be one*, or to have a *reasonable soul* in him.

And have we not the same way of procedure in the other case? Our *first view*, or taking notice of a world, full of life and motion, assures us of an *eternal active Being*, besides it; which *we take to be God*, having now before our eyes a *darker shadow* of him; only, as the *external bulk* of the *humane body*,



*dy, is only the shadow of a man. Which, when we behold it stirring and moving, assures us there is somewhat besides that grosser bulk (that of it self could not so move) which we take to be the soul of a man. Yet, as a principle that can move the body, makes not up the entire notion of this soul; so an eternal active Being, that moves the matter of the universe, makes not up the full notion of God. We are thus far sure in both cases, i. e. of some mover distinct from what is moved. But we are not yet sure (by what we hitherto see) what the one or the other is. But as, when we have, upon the first sight, thought it was a reasonable soul that was acting in the former: Or a man (if we will speak according to their sense, who make the soul, the man) in order to being sure (as sure as the case can admit) we have no other way, but to consider what belongs, more distinguishingly, to the notion of a man, or of a reasonable soul; and observe how actions, and effects, which we have opportunity to take notice of, do answer thereto, or serve to discover that. So when we would be sure, what that eternal active Being is (which that it is, we are already sure, and) which we have taken to be God, That*

*I say we may be sure of that also, we have the same thing to do.*

That is to consider what *more peculiarly*, belongs to the *entire notion of God* (and would even in the judgment of opposers be acknowledged to belong to it) and see whether *his works* more narrowly inspected, do not bear as *manifest correspondency to that notion of God* as the *works, and actions*, of a *man* do to the *notion* we have of *him*. And certainly, we cannot but find, they do correspond *as much*. And that upon a serious and considerate view of the *works, and appearances*, of *God*, in the world; having diligently observed, and pondered the *vastness*, and *beauty* of *this universe*, the *variety*, the *multitude*, the *order*, the *exquisite shapes*, and *numerous parts*, the admirable, and useful *composure*, of particular creatures; and, especially, the *constitution*, and *powers* of the *reasonable soul* of *man*, it self; we cannot, surely, if we be not under the possession of a very voluntary, and obstinate *blindness*, and the power of a most *vicious prejudice*, but acknowledge the making, sustaining, and governing, such a world, is as *God-like*, as worthy of *God*, and as much becoming him, according to the *notion* that

that hath been assigned of him, as at least, the *common actions* of ordinary *men*, are of a *man*; or evidence the doer of them to be an *humane creature*. Yea, and with this advantageous difference, that the *actions of a man* do evidence an *humane creature* more *uncertainly*; and so as it is *possible* the matter may be *otherwise*: But *these works* of God do with so *plain*, and *demonstrative evidence* discover him the *Author* of them, that it's *altogether impossible* they could *ever otherwise* have been done.

Now therefore, if we have as *clear evidence of a Deity*, as we can have, *in a way* not unfutable, to the nature, and present state of man; and we *can have in a futable way*, that which is *sufficient*.

If we have clearer, and more certain evidence of Gods government over the world, than most *men have*, or *can have*, of the existence of their *Secular Rulers*; yea, more sure than that there are *men on earth*, and that thence (as far as the existence of God will make towards it) there is a less disputable ground for *Religions* than for *Civil Conversation*, we may reckon our selves competently well ascertain'd, and have

no longer reason to delay the *Dedication of a temple* to him, upon any pretence of doubt, whether we have an *object of worship*, existing yea or no.

Wherefore we may also by the way take notice how impudent a thing is *Atheism*, that by the same fulsom, and poisonous breath, whereby it would *blast Religion*, would despoil *man* of *his reason*, and *apprehensive power*, even in reference to the most apprehensible thing; would blow away the *rights of Princes*, and all foundations of *Policy*, and *Government*, and destroy all *civil Commerce*, and *Conversation* out of the world, and yet blushes not at the attempt of so foul things,

VIII. And here it may perhaps prove worth our while (though it can be no pleasant contemplation) to pause a little, and make some short reflections, upon *the Atheistical Temper and Genius*, so as therein to remark some few more obvious characters of *Atheism it self*.

And *first* such, as have not been themselves seized by the infatuation, cannot but judge it a *most unreasonable thing*, a perverse and *cross-grain'd humour*, that so odly *writhes*, and *warps* the mind of a man; as that it never makes any effort,

fort, or offer at any thing *against the Deity*; but it therein doth (by a certain sort of *serpentine involution*, and *retortion*) seem to design a *quarrel with it self*: That is, with (what one would think should be most intimate, and natural to the mind of man) his very *reasoning power*, and the operations thereof. So near indeed, was the ancient alliance between *God* and *man* (his own Son, his likeness, and living image) and consequently between *Reason*, and *Religion*; that no man can ever be engaged in an opposition to *God*, and *his Interest*; but he must be equally so to *himself*, and *his own*. And any one that takes notice, how the business is carried by an Atheist, must think, in order to his becoming *one*, his *first plot* was upon *himself*. To assassinate his own *intellectual faculty*, by a sturdy resolution; and violent imposing on himself, *not to consider*, or use his thoughts, at least, with any indifferency, but with a treacherous pre-determination, to the part resolved on *before-hand*. Otherwise, it is hard to be imagined, how it should ever have been possible, that so *plain* and *evident* proofs of a *Deity*, as every where offer themselves unto observation; even such as have been here proposed (that do even



lie open, for the most part, to common apprehension, and needed little search to find them out; so that it was harder to determine what *not to say*, than *what to say* ) could be over-look'd.

For what could be more easie, and obvious, than taking notice, that there is *somewhat in Being*, to conclude that *somewhat must be of it self*, from whence, *whatever is not so*, must *have sprung*. That, since there is *somewhat effected*, or *made* (as is plain, in that some things are alterable, and daily altered, which nothing can be *that is of it self*, and therefore, a *necessary Being*.) *Those effects* have, then, had an *active being* for their *cause*. That since these *effects* are, partly, such as bear the manifest characters of *wisdom*, and *design* upon them; and are partly, *themselves*, wise and designing; therefore they must have had a *wisely active* and *designing* cause. So much would plainly conclude *the sum* of what we have been pleading for; and what can be plainer or doth require a shorter turn of thoughts? At this *easie expence* might any one that had a disposition to use his understanding *to such a purpose*, save himself from being an Atheist. And where is the *flaw*? what *Joynt* is not firm, and strong,  
in

in this *little frame* of discourse? which, yet arrogates nothing to the *contriver*; for there is nothing in it worthy to be called *contrivance*: But things do *themselves lie thus*. And what hath been further said, concerning the *Perfection*, and *Oneness*, of this *Cause of all things* (though somewhat more remote from common apprehension) is what is likely would appear *plain*, and *natural*, to such as would allow themselves the leisure, to look more narrowly into such things.

*Atheism*, therefore, seems to import a *direct* and *open hostility*, against the most *native*, *genuine*, and *facile* dictates of *common Reason*.

And being so manifest an *enemy to it*, we cannot suppose it should be at all *befriended by it*. For *that* will be always true and constant to it self. Whatsoever false shews of *it* a bad cause doth sometimes put on. *That* having yet somewhat a more creditable name, and being of a little more reputation in the world, than plain downright *madness* and *folly*. And it will appear how little it is befriended, by any thing that can justly, bear that *name*; if we consider the pitiful shifts the *Atheist* makes for his forlorn cause: And  
what

what infirm tottering supports, the whole frame of *Atheism* rests upon. For what is there to be said for *their hypothesis*, or against the existence of God, and the dueness of Religion?

For it, there's directly nothing at all. Only a possibility is alledged, things might be as they are, though God did not exist. And if this were barely possible, how little doth that signifie? where Reason is not injuriously dealt with, it is permitted the liberty of ballancing things equally, and of considering which scale hath most weight. And is he not perfectly blind, that sees not what violence is done to *free reason* in this matter? Are there not thousands of things, not altogether impossible, which yet, he would be concluded altogether out of his wits, that should profess to be of the opinion they are, or were actually so? And as to the present case, how facile and unexceptionable, how plain and intelligible, is the account that is given, of the original of this world; and the things contained in it, by resolving all into a Deity, the Author and maker of them? when as the wild, extravagant suppositions of *Atheists*, if they were admitted possible, are the most unlikely that could be devised. So that, if there had

had been any to have *laid wagers*, when things were *taking their beginning*; there is no body, that would not have ventured thousands, to one, that no such frame of things (no not so much as one single Mouse or Flea) would ever have hit. And how desperate hazards the *Atheist* runs, upon this meer *supposed possibility*, it will be more in our way to take notice by and by.

But besides; That pretended *possibility* plainly appears *none at all*. It is impossible *any thing should spring up of it self out of nothing*. That *any thing that is alterable, should have been necessarily of it self, such as it now is*. That *what is of it self unactive, should be the maker of other things*. That *the Author of all the Wisdom in the world, should be, himself, unwise*. These cannot but be judged most *absolute impossibilities*, to such as do not violence to their own minds; or with whom *Reason* can be allow'd any the least exercise. Wherefore the *Atheistical spirit*, is most grossly unreasonable, in with-holding assent, where the most ungainsayable Reason plainly exacts it.

And are not the Atheists Cavils as despicably silly *against the Deity*, and (consequently) *Religion*? Whosoever shall

shall consider their exceptions against some things in the *notion of God, eternity, infinity, &c.* which *themselves*, in the mean time, are forced to place elsewhere, will he not see they talk idly? And as for such other impeachments of his *Wisdom, Justice, and Goodness*, as they take their ground for from *the state of affairs*, in some respects, in this *present world* (many of which may be seen in *Lucretius*, and answered by Dr. *More* in his *Dialogues*.) How inconsiderable will they be, to any one that bethinks himself, with how *perfect*, and *generous* a liberty, *this world was made*, by one that needed it not; who had no design, nor could have inclination, to a *fond, self-indulgent glorying*, and *vaunting of his own work*; who did it with the *greatest facility*, and by an *easy, unexpensive vouchsafement of his good pleasure*; not with an *operose curiosity*, studious to approve it self to the *peevish eye*, of every froward *Momus*, or to the *nauseous squeamish gust* of every sensual *Epicure*. And to *such*, as shall not confine their mean thoughts, to that very clod, or ball of earth, on which they live. Which, as it is a very *small part*, may, for ought we know, but be the worst, or most abject part of *Gods*

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*Creation*, which yet, is full of *his Goodness*, and hath most manifest prints of his *other excellencies* besides; as hath been observed. Or, that shall not look upon the *present state of things* as the *eternal state*, but upon *this world* only as an antichamber to *another*, which shall abide in most unexceptionable perfection for ever.

How fond and idle, I say, will all such cavils appear *to one*, that shall but *thus use his thoughts*; and not think himself bound to measure his conceptions of God, by the uncertain, rash, dictates of men *born in the dark*, and that *talk at random*: Nor shall affix any thing to him, which *plain Reason* doth not dictate, or which he doth not manifestly assume, or challenge to himself. But that because a straw lies in my way, I would attempt to overturn heaven and earth, what raging phrensie is this?

Again it is a *base abject temper*, speaks a mind sunk and lost in carnality, and that having dethron'd and abjur'd *Reason* hath abandon'd it self to the hurry of *vile appetite*, and sold *its liberty*, and *sovereignty*, for the insipid, gustless pleasures of *sense*: An *unmanly thing*. A degrading of *ones self*. For if there be

no God, what am I? A piece of moving, *thinking clay*, whose ill compacted parts will shortly fly asunder, and leave no *other remains* of me, than what shall become the prey, and triumph of worms!

'Tis a *sad moapish, disconsolate Temper*, Cuts off, and quite bannishes all manly rational joy. All that might spring from the contemplation of the Divine Excellencies and Glory, shining in the works of his hands. *Atheism* clothes the world in black, draws a dark, and dusky cloud *over all things*. Doth more to damp, and stifle all relishes of *intellectual* pleasure, than it would of *sensible*, to extinguish the Sun. What is this world (if we should suppose it still to subsist) without God? How grateful an entertainment is it to a pious mind to behold his glory stamp'd on *every creature*? sparkling in *every providence*? and by a *firm, and rational Faith* to believe (when we cannot see) how all events are conspiring to bring about the *most happy, and blissful state of things*! The *Atheist* may make the most of this world; he knows no pleasure, but what can be drawn out of its *dry breasts*, or found in its *cold embraces*: Which yields as little satisfaction, as he finds, whose

arms aiming to inclose a *dear friend* do only clasp a *stiff and clammy carcass*. How uncomfortable a thing is it *to him*, that having neither *power* nor *wit* to order things to his own advantage or content, but finds himself liable to continual disappointments, and the ran- counter of many an unsuspected, cross accident, hath *none to repose on*, that is *wiser*, and *mightier* than himself? But when he finds he cannot command his own affairs, to have the settled apprehension of an *Almighty Ruler*, that can with the greatest certainty, do it *for us*, the best way; and *will*, if we trust him: How satisfying and peaceful a repose doth this yield? And how much the rather, inasmuch as that *filial unsuspicious* confidence, and trust, which naturally tends to, and begets *that calm*, and *quiet rest*, is the *very condition* required on my part; and *that*, the *chief thing* I have to do, to have my affairs brought to a good pass, is to *commit them* to his management. And my *only care* to be *careful in nothing*. The *Atheist* hath nothing to mitigate the greatness of *this loss*, but that he knows not *what he loses*; which is an *allay*, that will serve but a *little while*. And when the most, unsupportable, pressing mi-

series befall him, he must in bitter agonies, groan out his wretched soul, *without hope*; and sooner die under his burthen, than say, *Where is my God Maker*? At the best, he exchanges all the pleasure, and composure of mind, which certainly accompanies a dutiful son-like trust, submission and resignation of our selves, and all our concerns, to the disposal of fatherly wisdom, and love; for a *sour* and *sullen* succumbency to an *irrestible* fate, or hard necessity, against which he sees it's vain to contend. So that, at the best, he *only* not rages, but *tastes nothing* of consolation; whereof *his spirit* is as incapable, as his *desperate* affairs are of redress. And if he have arrived to that measure, of fortitude, as not to be much discomposed with the *lighter crosses*; which he meets with in this *short time of life*, what a dreadful cross is it *that he must die*! How dismal a thing is a certain *never to be avoided death*! Against which as *Atheism* hath not, surely, the *advantage of Religion* in giving *protection*: So it hath greatly the *disadvantage*, in *affording no relief*. What would the *joy* be worth in that hour, that arises from *the hope of the glory to be revealed*? And is the *want of that*, the  
total

total sum of the Atheists misery at this hour? What heart can conceive the horror of that one thought if darted in upon him at that time (as 'tis *strange*, and *more sad*, if it be not) *what becomes now of me, if there prove to be a God!* where are *my mighty demonstrations*, upon which one may venture? and which may cut off *all fear*, and danger of *future calamity* in this dark, unknown state I am going into? shall I be the next hour *nothing*, or *miserable*? Or if I had *opportunity*, shall I not have sufficient *cause* to proclaim (as \* once one of the same fraternity did, by way of warning, to a surviving companion)---A Great and a Terrible God! A Great and a Terrible God! A Great and a Terrible God!

\* Which story I confidently refer to, being of late date, and having had a certain and-

circumstantial account of it, by one (a very sober and intelligent person) who had the Relation from him to whom that dreadful warning was given, by his then lately deceased associate. But I shall not by a particular relation, gratifie the scorn of this sort of men, who taking advantage from the (sometimes deceived) credulity of well-meaning people, have but that way of answering all such things, by the *one word* which served once so learnedly, to confute *Bellarmino*.

I only add, 'Tis a *most strangely mysterious and unaccountable Temper*. Such as is hardly *reducible* to its proper *causes*. So that it would puzzle any mans enquiry to find out. or even give but

T 3

*probable*



*probable conjectures*, how so odd and preternatural, a disaffection as *Atheism* should ever come to have place in an *humane mind*. It must be concluded a very *complicated disease*, and yet, when our thoughts have fastened upon *several things*, that have an aspect *that way*, as *none of them alone*, could infer it ; so it is hard to imagine, how *all of them, together*, should ever come to deprave reasonable nature to *such a degree*.

'Tis, *first*, most astonishingly marvelous (though it's apparent this distemper hath its rise from an *ill will*) that any should so much as *will*, that which the Atheist hath obtained of himself to *believe*; or *affect to be*, what *he is*.

The commonness of this vile disposition of *will*, doth but sorrily shift off the wonder and only with those slight, and trifling minds, that have resigned the *office of judging things* to their (more active ) *senses* and have learned the easie way of waving all enquiries about common things, or resolving the account into *this only*, That they *are to be seen every day*. But if we allow'd our selves to consider *this matter* soberly, we would soon find, that, howsoever it most plainly appear, a very *common plague* upon the spirits of men  
(and

(and *universal* till a cure be wrought) to say, by way of *wish*, *no God*, or I would there were none: Yet, by the good leave of them who would thus easily excuse the thing, the commonness of this horrid evil doth so little diminish, that it increases the wonder. Things are *more strange*, as *their causes* are *more hardly assignable*. What should the reason be, that a Being of so incomparable excellency, so amiable and alluring glory, purity, love, and goodness is become undesirable and hateful to his own creatures! That such creatures, his more immediate peculiar off-spring, stamp'd with *his likeness*, the so vivid resemblances of his own *spiritual, immortal nature*, are become so wickedly unnatural towards their common, and most indulgent Parent! what to wish him dead! to envie life and being, to him from whom they have received their own! 'Tis as strange as it is *without a cause*. But they have *offended him*, are in a revolt, and *sharply conscious of fearful demerits*. And who would not wish to live? and to escape so unsupportable revenge? 'Tis still strange we would ever offend *such a one*! Wherein were his Laws unequal? his Government grievous? But *since we have*,

this only is pertinent to be said by them that have no hope of forgiveness, that are left to despair of reconciliation, why do we sort our selves with Devils? We profess not to be such.

Yea, *but we have no hope to be forgiven the sin we do not leave, nor power to leave the sin which now we love.* This, instead of lessening, makes the wonder a miracle! O wretched forlorn creature! wouldst thou have God out of Being for this? (I speak to thee who dost not yet profess to *believe* there is no God, but dost only *wish* it.) The sustainer of the world! The common Basis of all Being! dost thou know what thou sayest? Art thou not wishing they self and all things into nothing? This, rather than humble thy self, and beg forgiveness? This, rather than become, again, an *holy, pure, obedient* creature, and again, *blessed* in him, who *first* made thee so!

It can never cease, I say, to be a wonder, we never ought to cease wondering that ever this beset the nature of man, to be prone to *wish* such a thing, that *there were no God!*

But this is, 'tis true, the too common case; and if we will only have what is more a *rarity* go for a wonder;  
How

How amazing then is it, that if any man *would, even, never so fain*; he ever can make himself believe *there is no God!* and shape his *horrid course*, according to that most *horrid misbelief!* By what fatal train of causes is this ever brought to pass! Into what can we devise to resolve it?

*Why such as have arrived to this pitch are much addicted to the pleasing of their senses; and this they make their business; so as that, for a long time they have given themselves no leasure to mind objects of another nature; especially that should any way tend to disturb them in their ease course: Till they are (gradually) fallen into a forgetful sleep, and the images of things are worn out with them; that had only more slightly touch'd their minds before. And being much used to go by the suggestions of sense, they believe not what they neither see nor feel.*

This is somewhat, but does not reach the mark; for there are many very great sensualists (as great as they at least) who never arrive *hither*, but firmly avow it that they *believe a Deity*, whatsoever *mistaken notion* they have of him; whereupon they imagine to themselves impunity in their vicious course,

*But*

But these, it may be said, have so disaccustomed themselves to the exercise of their reason, that they have no disposition to use their thoughts about any thing above the sphere of sense; and have contracted so dull and sluggish a temper, that they, are no fitter to mind or employ themselves in any speculations that tend to beget in them the knowledge of God, than any man is for discourse, or business when he is fast asleep.

So indeed, in reason, one would expect to find it; but the case is so much otherwise, when we consider particular instances, that we are the more perplex'd and intangled in this enquiry, by considering how agreeable it is, that the matter should be thus; and observing that it proves, oft-times, not to be so: Infomuch that *reason*, and *experience*, seem herein, not to agree, and hence we are put again upon new conjectures what the immediate cause of this strange malady should be.

For did it proceed *purely*, from a sluggish temper of mind, unapt to reasoning, and discourse; the more any were so, the more dispos'd they should be to *Atheism*; Whereas, every one knows that multitudes of persons of dull and slow minds, to any thing of  
ratiocina-



ratiocination, would rather you should burn their houses, than tell them they *did not believe in God* ; and would presently tell you, it were pity he should live, that should but intimate a doubt, whether there were a God or no. Yea, and *many*, somewhat *more intelligent* ; yet in *this matter*, are shie of using their *Reason*, and think it *unsafe*, if not *profane*, to go about to prove, *that there is a God*, lest they should move a *doubt*, or seem, hereby to make a *question of it*. And, in the mean time, while they offer not at *reasoning*, they, more meanly, supply that want, after a sorry fashion, from their education, the tradition of their fore-fathers, common example, and the universal profession, and practice of *some Religion*, round about them, and it may be only take the matter for granted, because they never heard such a thing was ever doubted of, or called in question in all their lives.

Whereas, on the other hand, they who incline to *Atheism* are, perhaps, some of them the greatest pretenders to Reason. They rely little upon *authority* of former times, and ages, upon *vulgar principles*, and *maxims*, but are vogue'd great *masters of Reason*, diligent

ligent searchers into the mysteries of nature, and can philosophize (as sufficiently appears) beyond all imagination. But 'tis hoped it may be truly said, for the vindication of *Philosophy*, and them that profess it, that *modern Atheists* have little of *that* to glory in; and that their *chief endowments*, are only their *skill* to please their senses; and a faculty, with a pitiful sort of drolery, to tincture their cups, and add a grace to their (otherwise) dull and flat conversation.

Yet all this, howsoever, being considered, there is *here* but little advance made, to the finding out *whence Atheism should proceed*: For *that want of reason* should be thought *the cause*, what hath been already said seems to forbid. That many *ignorant persons* seem possess'd with a great awe of a Deity, from which divers *more knowing*, have delivered themselves. And yet neither doth the *former* signify any thing (in just interpretation) to the *disrepute of Religion*. For *truth* is not the *less true*, for that some hold it they know not *how* or *why*. Nor doth the *latter* make to the reputation of Atheism, inasmuch as men, otherwise rational, may sometimes learnedly dote. But it confirms us  
that

that *Atheism* is a strange thing, when its *extraction*, and *pedigree*, are so hardly found out, and it seems to be, *directly*, of the lineage, neither of *knowledge*, nor *ignorance*, neither *sound Reason*, nor *perfect Dotage*.

Nor doth it at all urge to say, And why may we not as well stand wondering, whence *the apprehension of a God*, and an addictedness to Religion, should come; when we find them *peculiar*, neither to the *more knowing*, nor the *more ignorant*. For they are apparently, and congruously enough to be derived from somewhat *common to them both*. The *impression of a Deity*, universally put upon the minds of all men (which Atheists have made a shift to raze out, or obliterate to that degree, as to render it illegible) and *that cultivated by the exercise of Reason*, in some, and in others, less capable of that help, somewhat confirmed *by education*, and the *other accessaries* mentioned above.

Therefore is this matter still most *mysteriously intricate*, that there should be *one temper*, and *perswasion*, agreeing to *two*, so vastly different; sorts of persons, while yet we are to seek for a cause (except what is most tremendous

to think of) from whence it should proceed, that is common to them both. And here is, in short the sum of the wonder, that any, not appearing very grossly unreasonable in *other matters*, (which cannot be deny'd even of some of the more sensual, and lewder sort of *Atheists*) should, in so plain and important a case, be so, beyond all expression, absurd. That they, without scruple, are pleased to think *like other men*, in matters that concern, and relate to *common practice*, and wherein they might more colourably, and with less hazard, go out of the common road. And are *here only*, so dangerously, and madly extravagant. *Theirs* is therefore a particular madness, the *Dementia quoad hoc*. So much the stranger thing, because they whom it possesses, do only in *this one case*, put off themselves, and are like themselves, and other men, in *all things else*. If they reckon'd it a glory to be singular, they might as hath been plainly shewn) more plausibly profess it as a principle, *that they are not bound to believe the existence of any secular Ruler* (and consequently not be subject to any) *longer than they see him*, and so subvert all *Policy*, and *Government*; or pretend an exemption from all obligation

gation to any act of justice, or to forbear the most injurious violence towards any man, *because they* are not infallibly certain any one they see is an *humane wight*, and so abjure *all morality*, as they already have so great a part; than offer with so fearful hazard to assault *the Deity* (of whose existence if they would but think a while, they might be most infallibly assured) or go about to subvert the foundations of Religion. Or, if they would get themselves glory by great adventures; or show themselves *brave men*, by expressing a fearless contempt of *Divine Power*, and *Justice*. This fortitude is not humane. These are without the compass of its object. *As Inundations, Earthquakes,* *Arist. Eth.*  
l. 3, &c. are said to be, unto which, that any one should fearlessly expose himself, can bring no profit to others; nor therefore glory to him.

In all this harangue of discourse the design hath not been to fix upon any true cause of *Atheism*, but to represent it a *strange thing*; And an *Atheist*, a *Prodigy*, a *Monster* amongst mankind. A dreadful spectacle, forsaken of the common aids afforded to other men, hung up in chains, to warn others; and let them see what an horrid creature,



*man may make himself, by voluntary aversion from God that made him.*

In the mean time, they upon whom this dreadful plague is not fallen, may plainly see before them, the *object* of that *worship*, which is imported by a Temple, *An existing Deity, a God to be worshipped.*

Unto whom we shall yet see further reason to *design*, and *consecrate* a Temple, for that end (and even our selves to become such) when we have considered (what comes next to be spoken of) his *Conversableness* with men.

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## CHAP. VI.

*What is intended by God's conversableness with men, considered only as fundamental and presupposed to a Temple. An account of the Epicurean Deity. Its existence impossible, any way, to be proved, if it did exist. Nor can be affirmed to any good intent. That such a Being is not God. That the absolute perfection proved of God represents him a fit object of Religion. From thence more particularly deduced to this purpose. His Omniscience, Om-*  
*nipo-*

*nipotency, Unlimited Goodness, Immen-*  
*sity. Curcellæus's Arguments against this*  
*last considered.*

NOR is the *thing here intended* less necessary to a *Temple, and Religion*, than what we have hitherto been discoursing of. For such a *sort of Deity*, as should shut up it self, and be reclus'd from all *converse with men*, would leave us as disfurnish'd of an *object of Religion*, and would render a *Temple on earth* as vain a thing, as if there were *none at all*. It were a *Being* not to be worshipped, nor with *any propriety*, to be called *God* more (in some respect less) than an *image, or statue*. We might, with as rational design, worship, for a *God*, what were scarce worthy to be called the shadow of a man, as dedicate *Temples* to a wholly unconvertible *Deity*: That is, such a one as not only *will not* vouchsafe to converse with men; but, that *cannot* admit it. Or *whose nature* were altogether incapable of *such converse*.

For that measure, and latitude of sense must be allowed unto the expression [conversableness with men] as that it signifie both *capacity*, and *propension* to such converse. That *God* is both,  
V by

by his *Nature*, capable of it, and hath a gracious inclination of *will* thereunto. Yea and we will add (what is also not without the compass of our present theam, nor the import of this word, whereby we generally expresse it) that he is not only *inclined* to converse with men; but that he *actually* doth it. As we call him a *conversable person*, that, upon all befitting occasions, doth freely converse with such, as have any concern with him.

It will indeed be necessary to distinguish Gods converse with men, into,

*That which he hath in common with all men*: so as to sustain them in their beings, and some way, influence their actions (in which kind he is also conversant with all his creatures) and

*That which he more peculiarly hath with good men.*

And though the consideration of the *latter* of these will belong to the discourse concerning *his Temple it self*, which he hath with, and in them; yet it is the *former*, only, we have *now* to consider, as *presupposed thereto*, and as *the ground thereof*. Together with his *gracious propension* to the latter also.

As

As the great *Apostle*, in his discourse at *Athens*, lays the same ground for acquaintance with God (which he intimates should be set a foot, and continued, in another sort of Temple, than is made with hands) that he hath given to all breath, and being, and all things, and that he is near, and ready (whence they should therefore seek him, if haply they might feel after him, and find him out) in order to further converse.

And here, our business will have the less in it of labour, and difficulty; for that we shall have little else to do, besides only the applying of principles already asserted (or possibly the more express adding of some, or other, that were imply'd, in what hath been said) to this purpose.

From which principles it will appear, that he not only *can*, but that (in the former sense) he doth converse with men, and is graciously inclin'd thereto (in the latter.) And yet because the former is more deeply fundamental, as whereon all depends, and that the act of it is not deny'd for any other reason than an imagined impossibility; that is, 'tis not said he doth not sustain and govern the world, upon any other pretence, but that he cannot (as being inconsistent with his

his *nature* and *felicity*:) This we shall therefore more directly apply our selves to evince, *That his nature doth not disallow it, but necessarily includes an aptitude thereto.*

Not yet, though it may be a less laborious work than the former, that we have dispatcht, is it altogether needless to deal somewhat more expressly in this matter. Inasmuch as what opposition hath been made to *Religion* in the world, hath, for the most part, been more expressly directed against *this ground* of it. I say more expressly; For indeed by plain, and manifest consequence it impugns that also of *Gods existence*: That is through *this*, it strikes at the *other*. For surely (howsoever any may arbitrarily, and with what impropriety and latitude of speech they please, bestow titles and eulogies here or there) That *being* is not *God*, that *cannot* converse with *men*; supposing them *such* as what purely, and peculiarly belongs to the nature of man, would bespeak them. So that they who have imagined such a being, and been pleased to call it *God*, have at once, said, and unsaid, the *same thing*. That *Deity* was but a *creature*, and that only, of their *own fancy*; and they have  
by



by the *same breath*, blown up and blasted, their own bubble, made it *seem something*, and *signifie nothing*. Have courted it into being, and rioted it again, quite out of it. In *their conceit*, created it a God, in *their practice*, a meer nullity. And it equally serv'd their turn, and as much favoured the design of being wicked, to acknowledge only a God they could *imagine*, and *dis-imagine* at their own pleasure; as to have acknowledged none at all. It could do no prejudice to their affairs to admit of this *fictitious Deity* that they could make be *what*, or *where* they pleased. That should affect *ease*, and *pleasure*, and (lest *his pleasures* and *theirs* should interfere) that they could confine to remote territories, and oblige to keep at an obedient, and untroublesome distance. Nor, though no imagination could be more madly extravagant, than that of a God no way concerned in the forming, and governing of the world; and, notwithstanding whom, men might take their liberty to do what they listed; yet, (as hath been observed long ago, that no opinion was ever so monstrously absurd, as not to be owned by *some of the Philosophers*) hath not *this* wanted patronage, and even among them who have obtained to be

esteemed (not to say idoliz'd) under that name.

Which would be seen, if it were worth the while to trouble the Reader with an account of *the Epicurean Deity*. As it can only be with this design, that the representation may render it (as it cannot but do) ridiculous, to sober men; and discover, to the rest, the vanity of their groundless, and self-contradicting hope (still too much fostered in the breasts of not a few) who promise themselves impunity in the most licentious course of wickedness, upon the security only of this their own idle dream. That is, that *if there be a God* (which they reckon it not so plausible, flatly to deny) he is a Being of either so *dull*, and phlegmatick a temper, that he *cannot* be concerned in the actions and affairs of men, or so *soft* and *easy* that he *will not*.

But, because his *good will*, alone, was not so safely to be rely'd on, it was thought the securer way not to let it be in *his power*, to intermeddle with their concernments. And therefore being to frame their *own God*, to *their own turn*; Thus the matter was of old, contriv'd.

*First,*

*First*, great care was taken that he be set at a distance remote enough; that he be complemented out of this world, as a place too mean for his reception, and unworthy such a presence. They being indeed unconcerned *where* he had his residence; So it were not too near *them*. So that a confinement of him somewhere, was thought altogether necessary.

*Ac designare quidem non*

*licet quibus in locis Dii degant. Cum ne noster quidem hic mundus, digna sit illorum sedes. Phil. Epicur. Syntag.*

*Secondly*, and then, with the same pretence of great observance, and respect, it is judg'd too great a trouble to him, and inconsistent with the *felicity* of his nature, and *being*, that he should have given himself any diversion or disturbance, by making the world. From the care, and labour, whereof, he is, with all ceremony, to be excused. It being too painful, and laborious an undertaking for an *immortal*, and an *happy* Being. Besides that he was altogether destitute of instruments, and utensils requisite to so great a performance.

—ἢ θεῶν  
φύσιν περὶ  
ταῦτα μη-  
δαμὴν προ-  
σαγείδω,  
ἀλλὰ

ἀλειτουργῶν διατηρεῖδω, καὶ ἐν τῇ πείρῃ μαρτυροῦμαι. Laertius, l. 10.---Qua molitio, qua ferramenta, qui vestes, qua machine, qui ministri tanti muneris fuerunt? Vell. apud Cicer. de natura Deorum.

Nihil bea-  
tius, nihil  
omnino bo-  
ni omni-  
bus astu-  
entius ex-  
cogitari  
potest. Ni-  
hil enim  
agit, nullis  
occupatio-  
nibus est  
implica-  
tus, &c.  
Id. Οταν  
τῷ θεῷ  
αὐτῷ οὐσίῃ  
μὴ λει-  
περιῶν  
ἀπλῶς  
σιν. Laert.  
ibid. Ita-

Whence also, *thirdly*, he was with the same reason to be excused of all the care, and incumbrance, of government (as indeed, what right or pretence could he have to the government of a world that chose him not, which is not, his inheritance, and which he never made? ) But all is very plausibly shadowed over with a great appearance of reverence, and veneration, with magnificent eulogies of his never interrupted felicity. Whence also it is made a very great crime not to free *even the Divine Nature it self*, from business. Though yet the true ground and

que imposuistis cervicibus nostris sempiternum dominum, quem, dies & noctes, timeremus. Quis enim non timeat omnia providentem, & cogitantem, & animadvertentem, & omnia ad se pertinere putantem, curiosum & plenum negotii Deum? Vell. ubi supra. Humana ante oculos fæde cum vita jacere. In terris oppressa gravi sub religione Primum Grains homo mortalis (meaning Epicurus the first champion of Irreligion.) Lucret. To which purpose besides what we have in Laert. τὸ μαχέριον καὶ ἀφθαρτον, ὅτι αὐτὸ παράγματα ἔχει, ὅτι ἄλλω παρέχει ὥστε ἔτι ὀρεῖται, ἔτι χέρισι συνέχεσαι ἐν αἰδείῃ καὶ πᾶν τὸ τοῖόν, l. 10. Much more is collected in the Syn- tagm. Nam & præstans Deorum natura hominum pietate coleretur, cum aterna esset & beatissima. Habet enim venerationem justam quicquid excellit. Et metus omnis, à vi atque ira Deorum pulsus esset. Intelligitur enim à beata immortalique natura, & iram & gratiam segregari. Quibus remotis, nullos à superis impendere metus, &c. Sect. 1. cap. 3. An & mundum fecit, & in mundo homines ut ab hominibus coleretur? At quid Deo cultus hominum confert, beato, & nulla re indigenti? Sect. 2. cap. 3.

root of this *Epicurean Faith* doth, sometime more apparently discover it self; even an *impatency of the Divine Government*, and a regret of that irksom bondage, which the acknowledgment of a *Deity, that were to be feared by men*, would infer upon them.

And therefore *fourthly*, he is further expressly asserted to be such as need not be feared; as cares not to be worshipped, as with whom neither *anger*, nor *favour* hath any place.

So that nothing more of *duty* is owing to him than a certain kind of *arbitrary veneration*, which we give to any *thing*, or *person* that we apprehend to excel us, and to be in some respect, better than our selves. An observance meerly upon *courtesie*. But *obedience* and *subjection to his Government*, fear of his *displeasure*, expectation of his *favour*, and *benefits*, have no place left them. We are not obliged to *worship him* as one with whom we have any concern, and do owe him no more homage than we have to the great *Mogul*, or the *Cham of Tartary*, and indeed are less liable to his severity, or capable of his favours, than *theirs*; for of *theirs*, we are in some *remote possibility*, of *his*, in none at all. In one word, all converse  
between



between *him* and *man*, on *his* part by *providence*, and on *ours* by *Religion*, is quite cut off. Which evidently appears (from what hath been already collected out of *his own words* and theirs who pretended to speak that so *admired Authors* mind, and sense) to be the scope, and sum of the *Epicurean doctrine*, in this matter, and was indeed observed to be so long ago; by one that we may suppose to have had better opportunity and advantages to know it, than we: Who discoursing that a man cannot live pleasantly, according to the principles of *Epicurus*. And that according to his doctrine beasts are more happy than men; plainly gives this reason why he says so, *viz.* that the Epicureans *took away providence*. And that the design of their discoursing concerning God was *that we might not fear him*.

Καί τοι οἱ  
μὲν ἐν τῇ  
προλήσει  
τὸ δεῦν τὴν  
πρόνοιαν  
ἀπίστιν,  
ἐφαίνοντο ἂν ἐλπίπ  
χρησαῖς πλέον ἔχοντες οἱ φερόμενοι τῇ θνητῶν  
περὶ τὸ ἡδέως ζῆν; ἐπεὶ δὲ περὶ τῷ τῶν περὶ θεῶν λόγῳ, τὸ μὴ  
φοβεῖσθαι θεόν, ἀλλὰ πάνσαισθαι τὰ ἐκ θεοῦ, βεβαιότατον οἶμαι  
εἶναι, &c. *Plut.*

Unto which purpose also much more may be seen in the same Author elsewhere, when he more directly pleads (among divers more philosophical subjects) on behalf of Religion against the *Epicurean*

Epicurean Doctrine which he saith they leave to us in word and shew, but, by their principles take away indeed, as they do nature, and the soul, &c.

*Adversus Colotem*

Πῶς ἐν ἀ-  
πολείπῃ  
σι φύσιν  
καὶ ψυχὴν

καὶ ζῶον; ὡς ἔρπον, ὡς ἐυχλῶ, ὡς θυσιάν, ὡς προσκύνεσιν, ῥήματα καὶ λόγους, καὶ τῷ φάναι καὶ προσποιεῖσθαι καὶ ὀνομαζέειν, ἀ τῶν ἀρχαῖς καὶ τοῖς δόγμασιν ἀναίρεσιν. Unto which purpose is that also in Tully. *At etiam de sanctitate, de pietate adversus Deos libros scripsit Epicurus. At quomodo in his loquitur? ut Coruncanium aut Scavolam Pontifices maximos te audire dicas non eum, qui subtulit omnem funditus religionem: Nec manibus ut Xerxes, sed rationibus Tempia Deorum & aras everterit. De natura Deorum.*

It is then out of question, that the Doctrine of *Epicurus* utterly takes away all intercourse between God and man. Which yet were little worth our notice, or consideration: nor would it answer any valuable end or purpose to revive the mention of such horrid opinions, or tell the world what such a one said or thought two thousand years ago. If *their grave* had been faithful to its trust, and had retain'd their filthy poisonous favour, within its own unhallowed Cell.

But since (against what were so much to have been desired, that their *womb* might have been their *Grave*) their *Grave* becomes their womb, where they are conceived, and formed anew, and whence, by a *second birth*, they spring forth afresh, to the great annoyance of the

the world, the debauching and endangering of mankind. And that it is necessary some remedy be endeavoured of so mortal an evil, it was also convenient to run it up to *its original*. And contend against it as in its primitive state, and vigour.

Wherefore this being a true (though it be a very short) account of the *Epicurean God*; resulting all into this shorter sum, *That he is altogether un-conversable with men* (and such therefore as cannot inhabit *their Temple*, and for whom they can have no obligation, or rational design, to provide any) it will be requisite in reference hereto, and sutable to our present scope, and purpose, severally to evince these things.

1. *That the existence of such a Being as this were impossible ever to be proved unto men, if it did exist.*
2. *That, Being supposed, without any good ground; 'tis equally unimaginable that the supposition of it can intend any valuable or good end.*
3. *That this supposed Being cannot be God, and is most abusively so called; as hereby, the true God, the cause and author of all things is intended to be excluded.*

4. *That*

4. *That it belongs to, and may be deduced from the true notion of God, which hath been given (and proved by parts of a really existent Being) that he is such as can converse with men.*

For the first, *That there is no way to prove the existence of such a Being, is evident.* For what ways of proving it can be thought of, which the supposition it self doth not forbid and reject? Is it to be proved by Revelation? But that supposes converse with men, and destroys what it should prove, *that such a Being, having no converse with men doth exist.* And where is that Revelation? Is it written or unwritten? Or who are its vouchers? Upon what authority doth it rest? who was appointed to inform the world in this matter? was *Epicurus* himself the *common Oracle*? why did he never tell men so? did he ever pretend to have seen any of *these* his vogued *Gods*? No, they are confessed not to be liable to *our sense*, any more than the *Inane* it self. And what Miracles did he ever work to confirm the truth of his Doctrine, in this matter? which sure was reasonably to be expected, from  
one

one who would gain credit to dictates, so contrary to the common sentiments of the rest of mankind ; And that were not to be proved *any other way*. And what other way can be devised ? can it admit of rational demonstration ? what shall be the medium ? shall it be from *the cause* ? But what cause can (or ever did) he or his followers assign of God ? Or from effects ? And what shall *they* be ? When the *matter of the whole universe* is supposed ever to have been *of it self*, and the *particular frame* of every thing made thereof, to have resulted only of the *casual coalition* of the parts of that matter ? And no *real Being* is supposed besides ? or shall it be that *their Idea*, which they have of God includes *existence*, as so belonging to him that he cannot but *exist*. But by what right do they affix such an *Idea* to their petite, and fictitious Deities ? How will they prove *their Idea* true ? or are we bound to take their words for it ? Yea it is easily proved *false*, and repugnant to *it self*, while they would have that to be *necessarily existent* (as they must if they will have it existent at all) unto which, in the mean time, they deny the other perfections which *necessary existence* hath been proved to  
in-



include. But how vain, and idle trifling is it, arbitrarily, and by a randomfancy, to imagine any thing what we please, and attributing of *our own special grace*, and *favour*, necessary existence to it, thence to conclude that it doth exist, only because we have been pleased to make that belong to the notion of it? What so odd and uncouth composition, can we form any conception of, which we may not *make exist*, at this rate?

But the *notion of God* is not *arbitrary*, but is *natural, proleptical*, and *common to men*, imprest upon the minds of all: whence they say it ought not to be drawn into controverſie. What? the *Epicurean notion of him*? we shall enquire further into that anon. And in the mean time, need not doubt to say, any man might, with as good pretence, imagine the ridiculous sort of Gods described in *Cicero's* Ironical supposition, and affirm them to exist, as they *those* they have thought fit to feign, and would impose upon the belief of men. And when they have fancied these to exist, is not that a mighty proof that they indeed do so?

But that, which for the present we alledge, is, that, supposing their noti-

on

*Deos, Strabones, pæ-  
tulos, næ-  
vum ha-  
bentes, Si-  
los, Flac-  
cos, Fronto-  
nes, Capi-  
tones, de  
Natura  
Deorum  
l. i.*

on were never so absolutely universal and agreeing with the common sentiments of all other men, they have, yet, precluded themselves of any right to argue, from its commonness, to the existence of the thing it self. Nor can they, *upon their principles*, form an argument thence, that shall conclude, or signify any thing to this purpose. None can be drawn hence, that will conclude immediately, and, *it self*, reach the mark; without the addition of some *further thing*, which so ill sorts with the rest of their Doctrine, that it would subvert the *whole frame*. That is, it follows not, that because men generally hold that there is a God, that therefore *there is one*, otherwise than as that consequence can be justified by this plain and irrefragable proof. That no reason can be devised of so general an agreement, or of that *so common an impression* upon the minds of men, but this only; that it must have proceeded from *one common cause*, viz. God himself; who having made man, so prime a part of his Creation, hath stamp't with his *own signature*, this nobler piece of his workmanship; and purposely made and fram'd him to the acknowledgment, and adoration of his Maker.

But

But how shall they argue so, who while they acknowledge a God, deny man to be his creature? and will have him and all things be by chance, or without dependence on any Maker? what can an impression infer to this purpose that comes no one can tell whence or how: But is plainly denied to be *from him*, whose *being* they would argue from it.

The observation of so common an apprehension in the minds of men, might (upon their supposition) beget much *wonder*, but no *knowledge*; and may perplex men much, how such a thing should come to pass, without making them any thing the wiser, and would infer *astonishment*, sooner than a *good conclusion*: or than it would solidly prove any important truth.

And do they think they have salved the business, and given us a satisfying account of this matter, by telling us, *this impression is from nature* (as they speak.) It were to be wish'd some of them had told us, or could yet tell us, what they meant *by nature*. Is it any intelligent principle? Or was it guided by any such? If yea, whence came this impression, but from God himself? For surely an intelligent

X                      Being,

Being that could have this universal influence upon the minds of all men, is much liker to be God than the *imaginary entities* they talk of, that are *bodies*, and *no bodies*, have bloud and no bloud, members and no members, are some where, and no where, or if they be any where, are confined to some certain places remote enough from our world; with the affairs whereof, or any other, they cannot any way concern themselves without quite undoing and spoiling their felicity. If they say no, and that nature which puts this stamp upon the minds of men, is an utterly unintelligent thing, nor was ever governed by any thing wiser than it self. Strange! that blind and undesigning nature, should, without being prompted, become thus ignorantly officious to these idle, voluptuary Godlings; and should so effectually take course they might be known to the world, who no way ever obliged it; nor were ever like to do! But to regress a little, fain I would know what is this thing they call nature? Is it any thing else than the course and inclination of conspiring Atoms, which singly are not pretended to bear any such impression; but as they luckily club, and  
hit

hit together, in the composition of an humane soul by the meerest and strangest chance that ever happen'd? But would we ever regard what they say whom we believe to *speak by chance*? were it to be supposed that characters, and words, serving to make up some proposition, or other, were by some strange agitation of wind, and waves, impress'd and figured on the sand; would we if we really believed the matter came to pass only by such an odd casualty, think *that proposition* any whit the truer, for being there, or take this for a demonstration of its truth, any more than if we had seen it in a Ballad? Because men have *casually* come to think so, therefore there are such beings (to becall'd Gods) between whom, and them, there never was, or shall be any intercourse, or mutual concern. It follows as well, as that, because the staff stands in the corner, the morrow will be a rainy day. The *dictates of nature* are, indeed most regardable things, taken as expressions of *his mind*, or emanations *from him*, who is the Author, and God of Nature. But abstracted from him; they are, and signifie as much, as a beam cut off from the body of the Sun. Or a person that pretends him-



self an Ambassadour; without credentials.

*Plutarch.*

Indeed (as is imported in the words noted from that *grave Pagan* a little before) the principles of these men destroy quite *nature* it self, as well as every thing of *Religion*. And leave us the *names*, and *shew* of them, but take away the *things themselves*. In sum, Though there be no such impression upon the minds of men as that which they talk of; yet if there were, no such thing can be inferr'd from it, as they would infer. Their principles taking away all connexion between the *argument*, and *what they would argue* by it.

2. We have also too much reason to add, *That as the supposition of such a Being, or sort of Beings can have no sufficient ground; so it is equally unconceivable that it can be intended for any good end.* Not that we think the last assertion a sufficient sole proof of this. For we easily acknowledge that it is possible enough men may harmlessly and with innocent intentions attempt the building very weighty and important Truths, upon weak, and insufficient foundations. Hoping they have offered that as a support unto Truth, which proves only an useless cumber. Nor were

were it just to impute Treachery where there is ground for the more charitable censure, that the misadventure proceeded only from want of judgment, and shortness of discourse. But it is neither needful, nor seemly, the charity which can willingly wink, in some cases should therefore be quite blind. Or that no difference should be made of well-meant mistakes, and mischief thinly hid, and covered over with specious pretences.

And let it be soberly considered, what can the design be, *after the cashiering of all solid grounds*, for the proving of a Deity, *at length* to acknowledge it *upon none at all*? As if their acknowledgment must owe it self, not to their *Reason*, but their *courtesie*. And when they have done what they can, to make the rest of men believe they have no need to own any God at all, and they can tell how all that concerns the making and governing the world, may well enough be dispacht *without any*. Yet, at last, they will be *so generous*, as to be content there shall be one *however*.

What, I say, can the design of this be, that they who have contended, with all imaginable obstinacy, against the most plain, and convincing evidences,

that do even defie cavil; have quite fought themselves blind, and lost their eyes in the encounter: so that they are ready to swear the Sun is a clod of dirt, and noon-day light is to them the very blackness of darkness. They cannot see a Deity, incircling them with the brightest beams, and shining upon them with the most conspicuous glory, through every thing that occurs, and all things that encompass them on every side. And yet when all is done, and their thunder-struck eyes make them fancy they have put out the Sun they have won the day, have cleared the field, and are absolute victors; they have vanquished the whole power of their most dreaded enemy, the *light that reveals God in his works*. After all this, without any inducement at all, and having triumpht over every thing that look'd like an *argument* to prove it. They vouchsafe to say however of their own accord *There is a God*. Surely if this have *any design at all*, it must be a *very bad one*. And see whither it tends. They have now, a *God of their own making*. And *all the Being*, he hath, depends upon their *grace*, and *favour*. They are not *his creatures*, but *he is theirs*. A  
preca-

precarious Deity, that shall be *as long*, and *what* and *where* they please to have him. And if he displease them, they can *think* him back *into nothing*. Here seems the *depth of the design*. For see with what cautions, and limitations, they admit him into being. There shall be a God provided he be not meddling, nor concern himself in their affairs, to the crossing of any inclinations, or humours which they are pleased shall command and govern their lives. Being conscious that if they admit of any at all, that shall have to do with their concerns, he cannot but be *such*, as the ways they resolve on, will displease. Their very shame will not permit them to call *that* God, which, if he take any cognisance at all of their course, will not dislike it. And herein that they may be the more secure, they judge it the most prudent course, not to allow him any part or interest in the affairs of the world at all.

Yet all this while they court him at a great rate, and *all religion* is taken away, under pretence of *great piety*: *Worship* they believe he cares not for, because he is *full* and *needs nothing*. In this world he must not be, for it is a

place unworthy of him. He must have had no hand in *framing*, nor can they think it fit he should have any in the *government* of it. For it would be a great disturbance to him, and interrupt his pleasures. The same thing as if certain licentious Courtiers, impatient of being governed, should address themselves to their Prince in such a form of speech, that it is beneath him to receive any homage from them, it would too much debase Majesty, that his Dominions afford no place fit for his residence; and therefore it would be convenient for him to betake himself into some other Country, that hath better air, and accommodation for delight. That Diadems and Scepters are burdensome things; Which therefore if he will quit to them, he may wholly give up himself to ease and pleasure.

Yea and whatsoever would any way tend to evince his necessary existence, is with the same courtship laid aside (although if he do not exist *necessarily*, and of himself, he cannot have any existence at all: For as they do not allow him to be the cause of any thing, so they assign nothing to be the cause of him) that is, with pretence there is no need it should be demonstrated,  
be-



because all men believe it without a reason ; nature having imprest this belief upon the minds of all ; or (which is all one) they having agreed to believe it because they believe. But though they have *no reason* to believe a Deity, they have a very *good one*, why they *would seem* to do so, that they may expiate with the people their *irreligion* by a collusive pretending against *Atheism*. And because they think it less plausible plainly to deny there is a God, they therefore grant one to *please the vulgar*, yet take care it shall be *one*, as *good as none*, lest otherwise they should *displease themselves*. And so their *credit*, and their *liberty* are both cared for together.

V. But this covering is too short, and the art by which they would fit it to their design, when it should cheat others, deceives themselves. For it is most evident,

3. *That the Being with the pretended belief whereof they would mock the world is no God ;* and that consequently, while they would seem to acknowledge a *Deity*, they really acknowledge none at all.

Our

Our contest hath not, all this while, been a strife *about words* ; or concerning the *name*, but the *thing it self*. And not whether there be such a thing in being to which that name may, with whatsoever impropriety, be given, but whether there be such a Being as where-to it properly belongs. Supposing, and taking for granted, as a matter out of question, that (*even in their own sense*) if such a Being, as we have described do exist ; it is most *properly God*. And that they will not go about to call it, by *another name*. Or that they will not pretend this name agrees to any other thing so fitly as to him. And because we have already proved this being doth exist, and that there can be but *one such*, it plainly follows *theirs is* in propriety of speech (even though he did exist) *no God*. And that, much less, should he appropriate the name, and exclude the *only true God*. For since the high, and dignifying, *elogies*, which they are wont to bestow upon their feigned Deity, do plainly shew, they would have it thought they esteem him the *most excellent* of all *existent Beings* ; if we have proved a *really existent Being*, to be *more excellent* than *he*, it is evident, even upon their own grounds, that  
*this*

*this is God.* Hither the *Deity* must be deferr'd. And *theirs* must yield, and give out. Inasmuch as we cannot suppose them so void of common sense, as to say the *less excellent Being is God*; and the *more excellent is no God*. But if they should be so, whereas the controverſie is not about *the name*; we have our main purpose in having proved there is, a *being actually existent*, that hath all the real excellencies which they ascribe to *their Deities*, and *infinitely more*. And as concerning the *name*, who made them *dictators* to all the world? and the sole judges of the propriety of words? Or with what *right* or *pretence*, will they assume so much to themselves? so, as against the rest of the world to *name that God*, from *which* they cut off the principal perfections wont to be signified by *that name*? And if we speak of such perfections as tend to infer, and establish *Religion* and *Providence*: Who but themselves, did ever call *that God* in the *eminent sense*, that they supposed could not *hear prayers*, and thereupon *dispense favours*, relieve the afflicted, supply the indigent, and receive suitable acknowledgments? *They indeed* (saith a famed Writer of Roman History) *that*  
*exerciſe*

ἐσοι μὲν ἔν τῃ φιλοσοφίᾳ, exercise themselves in the Atheistical sorts of Philosophy (if we may call that Philosophy) as they are wont to jeer at all ap-  
 &c.

D. Halicar. appearances of the Gods whether among the  
 nafs. Ant. Greeks, or the Barbarians, will make  
 Rom. l. 2. themselves matter of laughter of our Hi-

stories, not thinking that any God takes care of any man.--Let the story he there tells, shift for it self, in the mean time it appears they escap'd not the infamy of *Atheists*, who (what ever Deities they might imagine besides) did deny Gods presence, and regard to men. Which sort of persons he, elsewhere, often animadverts upon.

But do we need to insist, that all the rest of the world acknowledged no Gods, whom they did not also worship? what meant their Temples, and Altars, their Prayers and Sacrifices? or did they take *him* for God, whom they believed to take no care of them, or from whom they expected no advantage? Even the Barbarous *Scythians* themselves, understood it most inseparably to belong to a Deity to be beneficent; when they upbraidingly tell *Alexander*, That if he were a God, as they it seems had heard he vogue'd himself) he should bestow benefits upon men, and not take from them what was their own.

See their  
 Ambassa-  
 dours  
 Oration in  
 Q. Curti-  
 us.

And

And by the way it is observable how contradictory and repugnant, the Epicurean sentiments are, in this, even to themselves: that speaking of friendship (of which they say many generous and brave things) they (gallantly) profess (as *Plutarch* testifies of them) that it is a more pleasant thing to benefit others than to receive benefits ones self. They yet, while they seem so greatly concern'd, that their *Gods* be every way, most perfectly happy, deny to them this highest and most excellent part of felicity. That a virtuous man may a great deal more benefit the world, than they; and, consequently, have more pure and lively relishes of a genuine and refined pleasure.

*Lib. non  
posse sua-  
viter vivi,  
&c.*

*Vid. & lib.  
maxime  
cum prin-  
cip. viris  
Phil. &c.*

Upon the whole, it is manifest they so maim the notion of God, as to make it quite *another thing*. And if they think to wipe off any thing of the foul, and odious blot, wherewith their *avow'd irreligion* hath stain'd their name and memory, by the acknowledgment of *such a God*: They effect the like thing by it, and gain as much to the reputation of their piety, as he should, of his loyalty, who being accus'd of Treason against his Prince, shall think  
to



to vindicate himself, by professing solemnly to own the King. Provided you only mean by it the King of Clubs; or any such painted one the *pack* affords.

But here it may be demanded, is every misapprehension of God to be understood as a denial of his Being? If so, whom can we undertake to assail of Atheism? or who can certainly acquit himself? For how impossible is it to be sure we have no untrue conception of a Being so infinitely, by our own confession, above all our thoughts? Or how is it to be avoided, in somewhat or other, to *think amiss* of so unknown, and incomprehensibly excellent a Being? Either by *detracting* somewhat that belongs to it, or *attributing* somewhat that belongs not? And since many, we are sure, have thought and spoken unworthily of God, besides *Epicureans*, are all these to go into the account of *Atheists*? Or whereas it is commonly wont to be said, whatsoever *is in God, is God*: how can they who deny any thing of him, which is *really* in him, be excused of denying his *whole being*? or where will we fix the bounds of our *censure*?

*Many*

*Many things* should be said (if we will speak at all) to so *manifold an enquiry*. But it belongs not to the design of this discourse, to examine and discuss *all mens sentiments* of God, that have been exposed to the view of the world; or arbitrate, among the dissenting parties. Much less to *explain*, or *abet every School-maxim* that hath reference to this theme. The *Authors*, or *Lovers* whereof, will be sufficiently prompted by their *own Genius* to do, at least as much as can be requisite, herein. But whatever the *real sameness* is supposed to be, of the things attributed to God, it is acknowledged we cannot but conceive of them *as divers*. And so, that our conception of *any one*, is not adequate to the *entire object* (which is confessed incomprehensible.) Yet *any one attribute* gives a *true notion* of the *object*, so far as it reaches, though not *a full*. As I may be said truly to see a man, when I only see his face, and view not every *part*, and *limb*; or to *know him*, while yet I have not had opportunity to discern *every quality*, in his temper; and what his *dispositions* and *inclinations*, in all respects, are. Moreover it's *one thing* to *deny any Divine perfection*, another, only *not to know it*. And

And such meer *nescience* is so far from being guilty of the horrid crime of Atheism, that it's not so much as culpable, further than as it is obstinately persisted in, against sufficient evidence: for we are not obliged to know every thing, but what is *to us* knowable, and what we are *concerned* to know. Again (and which is most considerable to our purpose) we are not concerned to know what God is, *in himself*, otherwise than as we may *thereby* know, what he is *in relation to us*, *viz.* as he is the *Author of our Beings*, the *governour* of our lives, and actions, and thereupon the *object* of our *Religion*. For a *religious respect* unto him, is the very *end of that knowledge*. Now, if *any other*, than that sort of persons we oppose, have taken up apprehensions of him, not so suitable to that end; it were to be wisht they saw it, and would unthink all those thoughts? But surely, they who most professedly contend against the *very notions themselves* which directly influence *all our practice* toward God, so considered; would suggest such as are *wholly inconsistent therewith*; who oppose the *knowledge of God*, to the *end of that knowledge*; and do not merely mistake the *way* to that *end* while they

they are aiming at it, but most avowedly resist, and disclaim the *end it self*; are to be distinguished from *them*, who professedly intend *that same end*; only see not wherein their *misapprehensions* are prejudicial and repugnant to it: *otherwise* are ready to reject them. And the *former* are, therefore, most justly to be singled out, and designed the *objects* of our *direct opposition*. Nor are they so fitly to be opposed, under any other notion, as that of *Atheists*. For since our *knowledge of God* ought chiefly to respect him, in that forementioned *relative consideration*, and the enquiry what is God? signifies, *as it concerns us*, what is the *object of Religion*? They denying any such thing, deny *there is a God*. Nor do they deny him, in that *relative consideration* only; but (as every *relation* is founded in somewhat that is *absolute*) the very reason of their denying him, *so*, is that they deny *in him*, those *absolute*, and *positive perfections*, that render him *such*, as certain of those do, that have been proved to belong to him. Which is that we have next to consider, *viz.*

IV. *That it may evidently be deduced from what hath been said, tending to*  
Y prove

*prove those things of God which are included in the notion of him, and from that notion it self, that he is such as can converse with men.*

That is, having proved [*that there is an eternal self-subsisting independent necessary being of so great activity, life, power, wisdom and goodness, as to have been the maker of this world.*] And by this medium [*that we see this world is in being, which otherwise could never have been, much less such as we see it is.*] It therefore follows, that this great Creator can have influence upon the Creatures he hath made, in a way suitable to their natures. It follows, I say, from the same medium [*the present visible existence of this world, which could not otherwise be now in being*] that *he can* thus have influence upon his creatures: For it is hence manifest that he hath; they depend on him; and are sustained by him: Nor could more subsist *by themselves*, than they could *make themselves*, or, of themselves, have sprung out of nothing.

And if it were possible they could, being raised up into Being, continue in Being of themselves: Yet since our present question is not concerning what they *need*, but what God *can do*. And our  
adversa-



adversaries in the present cause, do not (as hath been noted) upon *any other pretence*, deny that he doth concern himself in the affairs of the universe, but *that he cannot*, (that is, that it consists not with his felicity, and he *cannot, not be happy.*) Is it not plain that he can with the same facility, continue the influence which he at first gave forth? And with as little prejudice to his felicity? For if it be *necessary* to him, to be *happy*, or *impossible* not to be so; he must be *ever so*. His happiness was not capable of being *discontinued*, so long, as while he made the world, settled the several *orders*, and *kinds*, and formed the *first individuals* of every kind of creatures. Therefore having done this, and without diminution to his happiness, was it a more toilsome, and less tolerable labour to keep things as they were, than to make them so? *If it was* (which no man that understands common sense would say) surely that *blind thing*, which they more blindly call *nature* (not understanding or being able to tell what they mean by it) and would have be the *only cause* of all things, acting at first to the uttermost, and having no way to

recruit its vigour, and reinforce it self, its labour and business being so much increased, had jaded and grown weary; had given out, and patiently suffered all things to dissolve and relapse into the *old chaos* long ago. But if the labour was not greater, to *continue* things in the state wherein they were made, than to *make them*; surely a *wise, intelligent, Deity*, which we have proved made them, could as well sustain them *being made*; as their *brutal* (and as unintelligible, as unintelligent) *nature* do both.

So much then of *intercourse* God could have with *his creatures*, as *his continual communication of his influence* to be received by them, amounts to. And then, *man*, not being excluded their number, must share in this *possible privilege*, according to the capacity of *his nature*.

And, inasmuch as we have also proved (more particularly) concerning *man*, that he immediately owes the peculiar excellencies of his intelligent nature, as it's *such*, to God only: It is apparently consequent, that having formed *this his more excellent creature*, according to his own *more express likeness*, stamp it with the glorious characters of his *living image*, given it a  
nature

nature *sutable to his own*, and thereby made it capable of *rational and intelligent* converse with him. He hath it ever in his power to maintain a *continual converse* with *this creature*, by agreeable communications. By letting in upon it, the *vital beams*, and *influences* of his own *light*, and *love*, and receiving back the *return* of its grateful *acknowledgements*, and *praises*. Wherein it's manifest he should do no *greater thing*, than he *hath done*. For who sees not, that it is a matter of no greater difficulty to *converse with*, than to *make* a reasonable creature? Or who would not be ashamed to deny, that he who hath been the *only Author* of the *soul of man*, and of the excellent powers and faculties belonging to it, can more easily sustain what he hath made? And converse with that his creature, *sutable* to the way wherein he hath made it capable of his converse?

Whereto, the consideration being added of *his gracious nature* (manifested in this creation it self) it is further evident, that he is (*as things are now ordered*; whereof more hereafter) not only *able*, but *apt* and *ready* to converse with men, in such a way, as shall tend to the improving of their being

unto that *Blessedness*, whereof he hath made them *naturally capable*. If their own voluntary *alienation*, and *aversion* to him (yet not overcome) do not obstruct the way of that intercourse.

And even *this* were sufficient to give *foundation to a Temple*, and both afford *encouragement*, and *infer an obligation to Religion*; although no other perfection had been, or could be, demonstrated of the Divine Being, than what is *immediately* to be collected from his works, and the things whereof he hath been the sole and most arbitrary Author. For what if *no more* were possible to be proved, have we not, even by *thus much*, a representation of *an object*, sufficiently worthy of our homage and adoration? He that could make and sustain such a world as this, how unexpressibly doth he surpass, in greatness, the most excellent of all mortal creatures! To some or other, of whom, upon some (meerly accidental) dignifying circumstances, we *justly* esteem our selves to owe a dutiful observance, and subjection.

If he did not comprehend within his own Being *simply all* perfection: If there were many Gods, and Worlds besides; and he only the *Creator*, and  
absolute

*absolute Lord* of our *vortex*, were not that enough to entitle him to all the obedience, and service we could give him? and enable him sufficiently to reward it? and render his *presence*, and cherishing influences (which he could every where diffuse within this circle, and limited portion of the universe) even infinitely covetable, and desirable to us?

Yea, if he were the only entire Author of our own *particular Being*, how much more is that, than the partial, subordinate interest of an *humane Parent*? To whom (as even an Epicurean would confess) *nature* it self urges and exacts a duty. The refusal whereof, even Barbarian ingenuity would abhor, yea and brutal instinct condemn? How much greater, and more absolute, is the *right*, which the *parentage* of *our whole being*, challenges? If every man were created by a *several God*, whose *creative power* were confined to *only one such creature*, and *each one* were the solitary product, and the charge of an *appropriate Deity*; whose dominion the state of things would allow to be extended so far, only, and no further, were there therefore no place left for *Religion*? Or no tie unto love, reverence, obedience,



and adoration, because the Author of my being comprehended not in himself all perfection? when as yet he comprehended *so much*, as to be the *sole cause* of all that is *in me*? And his power over me, and his goodness to me, are hereby supposed the same, which the *only one God*, truly hath and exerciseth towards all? If *all* that I am and have be for him, I cannot surely owe to him *less than all*?

Such as have either had, or supposed themselves to have, their particular *tutelary Genii*, (of whom there will be more occasion to take notice hereafter) though they reckoned them but a sort of *deputed*, or *vicarious Deities*, underling Gods whom they never accounted the *causes of their being*; yet how have they coveted, and gloried to open their breasts, to become *their Temples*, and entertain the converse of those (supposed) Divine inhabitants? If they had taken *one of these*, to be their *alone Creator*, how much greater had their veneration, and their homage been? This it may be hoped, will be thought sufficiently proved in this discourse (at least to have been so by some or other) *that we are not of our selves*; and that our extraction is to be fetcht higher

higher than from *matter*, or from only *humane progenitors*. Nothing that is *terrene*, and *mortal* could be the author of *such powers*, as we find in our selves. We are most certainly the off-spring of *some*, or *other Deity*. And he that made us, knows us throughly, can apply himself inwardly to us, receive our addresses and applications, our acknowledgments and adoration. Whereunto we should have even upon these terms great and manifest obligation, although nothing more of the excellency and perfection of our Creator were certainly known to us.

VII. But it hath been further shewn, that the *necessary being* from whence we sprang, is also an *absolutely, and infinitely perfect Being*. That *necessary Being* cannot be less perfect, than to include the *entire*, and *inexhaustible* fullness, of all *being* and *perfection*. That therefore the God to whom this notion belongs, must, consequently, be every way sufficient to *all*, and be himself but *one*. The only source and fountain of all life and Being; the common *basis* and support of the universe; The absolute Lord of this great Creation, and the central object of the common concurrent

current Trust, fear, love, and other worship of his Intelligent, and reasonable creatures.

And therefore, there remains no *greater, or other* difficulty, in apprehending how he can, without disturbance to himself, or interruption of his own felicity, intend all the concerns of his creatures, apply himself to them according to their several exigencies, satisfy their desires and cravings, inspect and govern their actions and affairs; than we have to apprehend a *Being absolutely and every way perfect*. Whereof if we cannot have a distinct apprehension all at once, *i. e.* though we cannot comprehend *every particular perfection* of God in the *same thought* (as our eye cannot behold, at one view, every part of an over-large object unto which however, part by part, it may be successively apply'd) we can yet in the *general* apprehend him *absolutely perfect*; or such to whom, we are sure, no perfection is wanting. And can successively contemplate *this* or *that*, as we are occasionally led to consider them: And can answer to our selves difficulties that occur to us, with this easie, sure, and ever ready solution; *that he can do all things, That nothing is too hard*  
for

for him, That he is full, all-sufficient, and every way perfect. Whereof we are the more confirmed that we find we cannot by the utmost range of our most enlarged thoughts, ever reach any bound, or end of that perfection, which yet we must conclude is necessarily to be attributed to an absolutely perfect Being.

And *this* we have reason to take for a very sufficient answer, to any doubt that can arise, concerning the possibility of his converse with us, unless we will be so unreasonable as to pretend, that what is brought for solution hath greater difficulty in it than the doubt. Or that because we cannot apprehend at once infinite perfection, therefore it cannot be, which were as much as to say, that it cannot be, because it is infinite; for it were not infinite, if we could distinctly apprehend it. And so were to make it a reason against it self; which is most injuriously, and with no pretence attempted, except we could shew an inconsistency in the terms; which it is plain we can never do; and should most idly attempt. And it were to make our present apprehension the measure of all reality; against our experience, which (if our indulgence to that self-magnifying conceit do not suspend our farther enqui-

enquiries, and researches) would daily bring to our notice, things we had no apprehension of before.

It were instead of that *just* and *laudable ambition* of becoming, our selves, like God *in his imitable perfections*, to make him like our selves. The true model of the *Epicurean Deity*.

Nor can any thing be more easie, than that wherein we pretend so great a difficulty ; that is to apprehend somewhat may be more perfect than we can apprehend. What else but proud ignorance, can hinder us from seeing, that the more we know, the more there is that we know not ? How often are we out-done by creatures of our *own order* in the Creation ! How many men are there whom we are daily constrain'd to admire, as unspeakably excelling us, and whom we cannot but acknowledge to be far more knowing, discerning, apprehensive of things, of more composed minds, of more penetrating judgments, of more quick and nimble wits, easily turning themselves to great variety of objects and affairs, without distraction and confusion, of more equal and dispassionate tempers, less liable to commotion, and disturbance *than our selves*.

How



How absurd and senseless a pretence is it, against the thing it self, *that we cannot apprehend* an infinite perfection in one common fountain of all perfection; or because *we cannot* go thro' a multitude of businesses, without distraction; that therefore, he that made us and all things, *cannot*. If we would make our selves the measure, 'tis likely we should confess we were out-strip, when we are told that *Julius Cæsar* could dictate letters when he was intent upon the greatest affairs to *four* (and if he had nothing else to divert him, to *seven*) *Secretaries*, at once. That *Cyrus* could call by name all the Souldiers in his numerous Army. With divers other strange instances of like nature. And since the perfections of *some* so far exceed the measure of the *most*, why is it then unconceivable that *Divine perfection* should so far surpass *all*, as that *God* may intend the affairs of the world, according to the several exigencies of his creatures, without any ungrateful diversion to himself, or

*Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. 7. c. 25. Id. l. 7. c. 24. vid. & Xenoph. de Cyr. Pad. l. 5. Who tho' he expressly say not he knew all the Souldiers names, but seems rather to mean it of their Officers (for saith he, he reckon'd*

it an absurd thing a Mechanick should know the names of all his Tools, &c. And a General not know the names of his Captains under him, &c.) yet he saith, the Souldiers wonder'd *πῶς ὀνομάζων ἰστέλλαντο*.

dimi-

diminution to his felicity? And since they who partake of *some*, and but a *small portion* of perfection only, can be concern'd in *many affairs* with *little trouble*, why cannot he that comprehends *all perfection* be concern'd in *all* without *any*? For though we have, in what hath been last said, endeavour'd to represent it, as not so unapprehensible, as is pretended, that it *may be also*, we take it, in the mean time, as formerly sufficiently proved, that *so it is*, That God is a being absolutely perfect, or that includes eminently all perfection in himself.

VIII. Which *general perfection* of his *Being*, as it modifies *all his attributes*, so we shall *particularly* take notice that it doth so, as to those that have a more direct influence upon, and tend more fully to evince, his *conversableness with men*. As first: *His wisdom or knowledge* (for we need not be so curious as at present to distinguish them) must be *omniscience*. About which, if any place were left for rational doubt, it would be obvious to them to alledge it, who are of slower inclinations towards Religion. And object (against all applications to, or expectations from him)

him) That if we be not sure he knows *simply all things* so as wisely to consider them and resolve fitly about them, it will be no little difficulty to determine, *which he doth*, and *which not* ; or to be at a certainty, that this or that concernment of theirs, about which they might address themselves to him, be not among the *unknown things*. At least, we shall the less need to be curious in distinguishing, or to consider what things may be supposed rather than other, to be without the compass of his knowledge; if it appear that it universally encompasses all things. Or that nothing can be without its reach. And because we suppose it, already, out of doubt, that the *true notion* of God, imports a Being absolutely or every way perfect; nothing else can be doubted in this matter, but, *whether the knowledge of all things be a perfection?*

The greatest difficulty that hath troubled some in this matter hath been, *How it is possible there should be any certain knowledge of events yet to come, that depend upon a free, and self-determining cause*. But methinks we should not make a difficulty to acknowledge, that to know these things, imports greater perfection, than not to know them ;  
and

and then it would be very unreasonable, because we cannot shew how this or that thing was performed, which manifestly is done; therefore to deny that it is done at all. So far is it, that we can, with any shew of reason, conclude against *any act* of God, from our ignorance of the *manner* of it; that we should reckon it very absurd to conclude so, concerning any *act of our own*, or our ability thereto. What if it were hitherto an unknown thing and impossible to be determined; how the *act of vision* is performed by us: were it a wise conclusion, that therefore we neither *do*, nor *can see*? How much more rash and presuming a confidence were it to reason thus concerning the *Divine acts*, and *perfections*! would we not in any such case be determined rather by that which is more evident, than by what is more obscure? As in the assigned instance: we should have but these two propositions to compare [that I do (or have such a perfection belonging to me that I can) see] and [that whatsoever act I do or can do, I am able to understand the *course*, and *method* of natures operation therein.] And thereupon to judge which of *these two*, is more evident. Wherein it may be

be supposed there's no man in his wits, to whom the determination would not be easie. Accordingly in the present case, we have only these *two assertions*, that can be in competition, in point of evidence, between which we are to make a *comparison* and a (consequent) *judgment*, viz. [whatsoever perfection belongs to a Being absolutely perfect, enabling it to do this or that, the wit of man can comprehend the distinct way and manner of doing it] and [it imports greater perfection to know all things, than to be ignorant of some] and here surely whosoever shall think the determination difficult, accounts the *wit of man* so exceeding great, that he discovers *his own* to be *very little*. For what can the pretence of evidence be in the *former* assertion? Was it necessary that *he*, in whose choice it was whether we should ever know any thing or no, should make us capable of knowing every thing, belonging to *his own being*? Or will we adventure to be so assuming, as while we deny it to God that he knows all things, to attribute to our selves that we do? But if we will think it not altogether unworthy of us to be ignorant of some thing, what is there of which we may with *more probability*

Z



*bability*, or with *less disparagement*, be thought so, than the *manner of Gods knowing things*? And what place is there for complaint of inevidence in the *latter*? Is not that knowledge more perfect, which so fully already comprehends all things, as upon that account to admit of no increase; than that which shall be every day growing, and have a continual succession of new objects emerging, and coming into view; before, altogether unknown? And will not that be the case if we suppose *future contingencies* to lie conceal'd from the penetrating eye of God? For whatsoever is *future*, will some time be present, and *then* we will allow *such contingencies* to be known to him. That is, that God may know them, when we our selves can! And that nothing *of that kind*, is known to him, which is not, at least knowable some way or other, *to our selves*, at least successively, and one thing, after another. We will perhaps, allow that prerogative to God, in point of this knowledge, that *he* can know *these things*, now fall'n out, all at once, *we* but by degrees, while yet there is not *any one* that is absolutely unknowable to us. But why should it be thought unreasonable, to attribute  
an

an excellency to the knowledge of God, *above ours*; as well in respect of the *manner of knowing*, as the *multitude of objects*, at once, known? we will readily confess, in some creatures, an excellency of their *visive faculty*, above our own; that they can see things in that darkness, wherein they are, to us, invisible. And will we not allow that to the *eye of God*, which is *as a flame of fire*, to be able to penetrate into the abstrusest darkness, of *futurity*, though we know not *the way*, how it is done; when yet we know that whatsoever belongs to the most perfect being, must belong to his? And that knowledge of *all things*, imports more perfection, than if it were lessened by the ignorance of *any thing*.

Some who have thought the certain foreknowledge of future contingencies, not attributable to God, have reckoned the matter sufficiently excused; by *this*, that it no more detracts from the *Divine omniscience*, to state without the *object of it*, things not *possible*, or that imply a contradiction (as they suppose these do) *to be known*, than it doth *from his omnipotency*, that it cannot *do* what is impossible, or that implies a contradiction *to be done*.

But against *this*, there seems to lie this reasonable exception, that the *two cases* appear not sufficiently alike: Inasmuch as the supposition of the *former*, will be found not to leave the blessed God equally entitled to *omniscieny*, as the *latter* to *omnipotency*. For [all things] should not be *alike* the object of both. And why should not *that* be understood to signifie the knowledge of *simply all things* ; as well as *this* the power of doing *simply all things* ? Or why should *all things* included in these two words, signifie so very diversly, that is *there* properly *all things here some things* only. And why must we so difference the object of *omniscieny*, and *omnipotency* ? as to make *that* so much narrower than *this* ? And then how is it *all things*, when so great a number of things will be left excluded ? Whereas from the object of *omnipotency* (that we may prevent what would be reply'd) there will be *no exclusion of any thing*. Not of the things which are actually already made ; for they are still momentarily reproduc'd by the *same power*. Not of the *actions*, and *effects* of *free causes* yet *future* ; for, when they become *actual*, God doth certainly perform the part of the *first cause* (even

(even by common consent) in order, to their becoming so ; which is certainly *doing somewhat*, though all be not agreed what *that part* is. Therefore they are, in the mean time, to be esteemed within the *object of omnipotency*, or to be *of the things* which God *can do*, viz. as the *first cause* virtually including the *power* of the *second*.

But more strictly ; all impossibility is either *natural*, and *absolute*, or *moral* and *conditional*. What is *absolutely*, or *naturally impossible*, or repugnant in it self, is not properly *any thing*. Whatsoever *simple being* not yet existent, we can form any conception of, is *producible*, and so within the compass of omnipotency ; for there is no repugnancy in simplicity. That wherein therefore we place *natural impossibility*, is the inconsistency of being *this thing*, whose notion is such, and *another wholly and entirely* ; whose notion is divers, at the same time (that which, more barbarously than insignificantly, hath been wont to be called *impossibility* :) But surely all things are properly enough said to be naturally possible to God, while all *simple beings* are producible by him, of which any notion can be for-

med ; yea and *compounded*, so as by their composition to result into a *third thing*. So that it is not an exception, to say, that it is naturally impossible *this thing* should be *another thing*, and yet be wholly *it self* still at once ; that it should be and not be, or be without it self. There is not within the compass of *actual*, or *conceivable being* such a thing. Nor is it reasonable to except *such actions* as are naturally possible to *other Agents*, but not to him ; As to *walk*, for instance, or the like. Inasmuch as, though the excellency of his nature permits not they should be done by him ; yet since *their* power of doing them proceeds wholly from him, he hath it virtually and eminently in himself. As was formerly said of the infiniteness of his Being. And for *moral impossibility*, as to *lye*, to do an *unjust act* ; That God never does them proceeds not from *want of power*, but an *eternal aversion of will*. It cannot be said he is not *able* to do such a thing, *if he would*, but so is *his will* qualified and conditioned, by its own unchangeable rectitude, that he most certainly *never will*, or such things as are *in themselves evil*, are never done by him, not thro' the



the defect of *natural power*, but from the permanent stability, and *fulness* of all *moral perfection*. And it is not without the compass of *absolute omnipotency* to do what is but *conditionally impossible*. The absence of which restrictive condition, would rather bespeak *impotency* and imperfection, than *omnipotency*. Therefore the object of omnipotence is *simply all things*. Why not of *omniscience* as well? It may be said [all things] as it signifies the object of omniscience is only restrained by the act or faculty, signified therewith in the same word, so as to denote the *formal object* of that faculty or act, *viz.* all *knowable things*. But surely that act must suppose some Agent, whereto that *knowable* hath reference. Knowable? to whom? to *others*, or to *God himself*? If we say the *former*, it is indeed a great honour we put upon God, to say he can know as much as *others*: if the latter, we speak absurdly, and only say he *can know all that he can know*. It were fairer to deny *omniscience* than so interpret it.

But if it be denied, what shall the pretence be? why, that it implies a contradiction future contingents should be

*Quales res* certainly known : For they are *uncertain*,  
*est talis est* and nothing can be otherwise truly  
*rei cogni-* known than *as it is*.  
*tio. Si ita-*

*que res sit*  
*incerta* (puta incertum est hoc ne sit futurum, an non) non datur ulla  
*certa ejus notitia. Quomodo enim fieri potest ut certo sciatur, ad-*  
*fore quod certo futurum non est, &c.* Strangius de voluntate &  
 Actionibus Dei, &c. l. 3. c. 6. (as he there objects to himself.

And it must be acknowledged that to  
*whom* any thing is uncertain, it is a con-  
 tradiction that *to him* it should be cer-  
 tainly known. But that such things  
 are *uncertain to God*, needs other proof  
 than I have meet with, in what follows  
 in *that cited Author*, or elsewhere.  
 All which will amount to no more than  
 this, that such things as *we* cannot *tell*  
*how* God knows them, must needs be un-  
 known to him. But since we are sure  
 many such things have been *certainly*  
*foretold* by God (and, of them, *such* as,  
 we may be also sure, he never intended  
 to effect) we have reason enough to be  
 confident, that *such things* are not *un-*  
*knowable* to him. And for the *man-*  
*ner of his knowing* them, it is better to  
 profess ignorance about it, than attempt  
 the explication thereof, either *unintel-*  
*ligibly*, as some have, *to no purpose*, or  
*dangerously and impiously*, as others have  
 adventured to do, *to very bad purpose*.

And

And it well becomes us to suppose an infinite understanding may have ways of knowing things which we know nothing of. To my apprehension, that last mentioned *Author* doth with *ill success*, attempt an explication of Gods manner of knowing this sort of things, by the far less intelligible notion, of the indivisibility of eternity, comprehending (as he says) all the parts of time, not successively, but together. And though he truly say that the *Scotists* way of expressing how future contingents are present to God, *i. e.* according to their *objective and intentional being* only; affords us no account *why* God knows them, for which cause he rejects it; and follows that of the *Thomists*, who will have them to be present according to their *real and actual existence*. I should yet prefer the deficiency of the former way, before the contradictiousness and repugnancy of the latter; and conceive those words in the *Divine Dialogues*, as good an explication of the manner of his knowledge, as the case can admit, (which yet is but the *Scotists* sense) “ That the whole evolution of times and ages, is so collectedly, and presentifickly represented to God, at once, *as if* all

Dr. Mwa.

Of Bathy-  
mus in the  
same Dia-  
logues.

“ all things and actions which ever  
 “ were, are, or shall be, were at this  
 “ very instant, and so always really pre-  
 “ sent and existent before him. Which  
 “ is no wonder, the animadversion and  
 “ intellectual comprehension of God,  
 “ being absolutely infinite, according  
 “ to the truth of his Idea. I do there-  
 “ fore think that a sober resolution in  
 “ this matter, That it seems more safe,  
 “ to allow this privilege to the infinite  
 “ understanding of God, than to ven-  
 “ ture at all to circumscribe his omni-  
 “ science: For though it may safely be  
 “ said, that he knows not any thing  
 “ that really implies a contradiction to  
 “ be known; yet we are not assured  
 “ but that may seem a contradiction to  
 “ us, that is not so really in it self. And  
 when we have only humane wit to  
 contest with, in the case; Reverence  
 of *this*, or *that man*, tho’ *both* in great  
 vogue, *in that kind*, needs not restrain  
 us from distinguishing, between a meer  
*seeming latent* contradiction; and a *flat*,  
*downright*, open one.

Only, as to that instance of the *com-  
 mensurableness* of the diagonal line of  
 a Quadrate to one of the sides; where-  
 as, though there are great difficulties on  
 both sides, viz. that *these are commen-  
 surable*,

*surable, and that they are not*; yet any mans judgment would rather incline to the *latter*, as the *easier part*: I should therefore also think it more safe to make choice of *that*, as the parallel of the present difficulty.

Upon the whole, we may conclude that the knowledge of God is *every way perfect*; and being so, extends to all our concerns. And that nothing remains, *upon that account* to make us decline applying our selves to Religious converses with him; or deny him the honour and entertainment of a Temple. For which we shall yet see further cause, when we consider next,

IX. *That his power is also omnipotent.* Which (though the discourse of it have been occasionally somewhat mingled with that of the last) might be directly spoken of for the fuller evi<sup>ti</sup>on of *that his conversableness* with men, which Religion, and a Temple do suppose. Nor, indeed, is it enough that he knows our concerns, except he can also *provide effectually* about them and dispose of them to our advantage. And we cannot doubt, but he, who could create us, and such a world as this, can do so, even though he were supposed *not omnipotent*. But even



even *that*, it self, seems a very unreasonable supposition; that *less than infinite power* should suffice to the creation of any thing. For however liable it may be to controverſie, what a *second cauſe* might do herein; being aſſiſted by the infinite power of the *firſt*: It ſeems altogether unimaginable, to us, how, though the power of *all men* were met in *one* (which we will eaſily ſuppoſe to be a very vaſt power) it could, alone, be ſufficient to make the minuteſt atom ariſe into being out of nothing. And that *all the matter of the univerſe* hath been ſo produc'd, viz. out of nothing, it will be no great preſumption to ſuppoſe already fully proved; in that though any ſuch thing as neceſſary matter were admitted, yet its *eſſential unalterableneſs* would render it impoſſible it ſhould be the matter of the univerſe. Therefore when we cannot deviſe what *finite power* can ever ſuffice (ſuppoſe we it never ſo much increaſed, but ſtill *finite*) to the doing of that which we are ſure is done, what is left uſto ſuppoſe, but that the power which did it is *ſimply infinite*: much more when we conſider, not only that *ſomething* is *actually* produced out of nothing, but do alſo ſeriously contemplate

plate *the nature of the production*. Which carries so much of amazing wonder in it, every where; that even the least and most *minute things* might serve for sufficient instances of the *unlimited greatness* of *that power* which made them. As would be seen, if we did industriously set our selves to compare the effects of *Divine Power* with those of *humane art*, and skill. As is the *ingenious* and *pious* observation of the most worthy Mr. *Hooke*, who upon his viewing, with his *Microscope*, the point of a small and very sharp needle (than which we cannot conceive a smaller thing laboured by the hand of man) takes notice of sundry sorts of natural things, "That have points many thousand times sharper: those of the hairs of insects, &c. *That* appearing broad, irregular and uneven, having marks upon it, of the rudeness and bungling of *art*. So unaccurate (saith he) it is in all its productions, even in those that seem most neat, that, if examined truly, with an organ more acute, than that by which they were made, the more we see of *their shape* the less appearance will there be of *their beauty*: Whereas in the works of *Nature* the deepest discoveries  
" shew

In his  
*Micrographia*.

“ shew us the greatest excellencies. An  
 “ evident Argument that he that was  
 “ the Author of *these things*, was no o-  
 “ ther than *omnipotent*, being able to  
 “ include as great a variety of parts,  
 “ in the *yet smallest discernable point*, as  
 “ in the *vaster bodies* (which compara-  
 “ tively are called also points) such as  
 “ the Earth, Sun, or Planets. And I  
 may add, when those appear but *points*,  
 in comparison of his so much *vaster*  
*work*, how plainly doth that also argue  
 to us the *same thing*?

And let us strictly consider the matter.  
*Omnipotency*, as hath been said imports  
 a power of doing all *things possible to*  
*be done*, or indeed, *simply all things* ;  
 unto which *passive power*, an *active one*  
 must necessarily correspond. That is,  
 there is nothing in it self possible to be  
 done, but it is also possible to some one  
 or other to do it. If we should there-  
 fore suppose God *not omnipotent*, it  
 would follow some *one* or *other* were  
 able to do *more than God*. For tho’  
 possibility do *import* a non-repugnancy  
 in the thing to be done ; yet it also *con-*  
*notes* an ability in *some Agent* to do it.  
 Wherefore there is nothing *possible*  
 which *some Agent* cannot do. And if  
 so, that *Agent* must either be God, or  
 some

*some other. To say it is God*, is what we intend. That is, there is nothing possible which God cannot do. Or he can do all things. *But to say it is some other and not God*, were to open the door to the above-mention edhorrid consequence; which no one that acknowledges a God (and we are not now discoursing with them who simply deny his Being) would not both *blush*, and *tremble* to avow.

Some indeed have so over-done the business here as to deny any *intrinsecal possibility* of any thing, and say that things are only said to be *possible*, because God can do them; which is the same thing as *thus* to explain Gods omnipotency, *i. e.* that he can do all things which he can do. And makes a *Chimera* no more impossible, *in it self*.  
o be produced, than a *not yet existent man*. And the reason of the denial is, that what is *only possible* is nothing; and therefore can have *nothing intrinsecal to it*. As if it were not sufficient to the *intrinsecal possibility* of a thing, that *its Idea* have no repugnancy in it. Yet *entire and full possibility* connotes a reference to the productive power of an Agent; so that it is equally absurd to say that things are *only possible*, because  
there

there is no repugnancy in their Idea's, as it is to say they are *only possible*, because some Agent can do them. Inasmuch as the *entire possibility of their existence* imports both, *that there is no repugnancy in their Idea's* which if there be, they are *every way nothing*, (as hath been said before) and also, *that there is a sufficient power to produce them*. Therefore, whereas we might believe him sufficient every way *for us*, though we did not believe him *simply omnipotent*; how much more fully are we assured, when we consider that he is? Whereof also no place of doubt can remain, this being a *most unquestionable perfection*, necessarily included, in the *notion of an absolutely perfect Being*. But here we need not further insist, having no *peculiar adversary (in this matter singly)* to contend with, (as indeed he would have had an hard province who should have undertaken to contend against omnipotency.)

And now joyn herewith again the *boundlessness of his goodness*, which upon the same ground of *his absolute perfection*, must be *infinite* also, (and which it is of equal concernment to us to consider, that we may understand he not only *can* effectually provide about our concern-



concernments, but is most *graciously inclined* so to do.) And then, what rational inducement is wanting to *Religion*, and the *Dedication of a Temple*? If we consider the joynt encouragement that arises from so *unlimited power*, and *goodness*? or what man would not become entirely devoted to *him*, who, by the one of these, we are assured, *can do all things*, and by the other, *will do what is best*. \*

Nor therefore is there any thing immediately needful to our present purpose, *the eviction of Gods conversableness with men*, more than hath been already said. That is, there is nothing else to be thought on, that hath any *nearer influence* thereon. The things that can be supposed to have *such influence*, being none else than his *Power, Knowledge and Goodness*, which have been particularly evinced from the *Creation of the world*, both to have been in some *former subject*, and to have *all* originally met in a *necessary being*, that alone could be the *Creator* of it. Which necessary Being, *as it is such*, appearing, also, to be *infinite*, and *absolutely perfect*; the *influence of these* cannot but the more abundantly appear to be such as *can* and *may* most sufficiently

\* Δυναμὶς  
μὲν πάντα  
βελουμένη  
δὲ τὰ ἀέρ-  
σα. Phil.  
Jud. de  
Abr.

and fully correspond, both, *in general* to the several exigencies of *all creatures*, and more *especially* to all the real necessities, and reasonable desires of *man*. So that our main purpose seems already gained.

Yet because it may be grateful when we are perswaded *that things are so*, to fortifie (as much as we can) that perswasion, and because our perswasion concerning these attributes of God will be still liable to assault unless we acknowledge him *every where present*. Nor can it well be conceivable, otherwise, how the influence of his knowledge, power, and goodness can be so universal, as will be thought necessary to infer an universal obligation to Religion. It will be therefore requisite to add somewhat concerning his *Omnipresence*, or, because some, that love to be very *strictly critical*, will be apt to think *that term* restrictive of his presence to the *universe* (as supposing to *be present* is relative to somewhat, one may be said *present* unto, whereas they will say without the universe, is nothing) we will rather chuse to call it *immensity*. For though it would sufficiently answer our purpose, that his *presence be universal*, to all his creatures; yet even  
*this*

*this* is to be proved by such arguments as will conclude him *simply immense*. Which therefore will, with the greater advantage, infer the thing we intend.

*This part of Divine perfection* we will acknowledge to have been impugned, by some that have professed much devotedness to a *Deity* and *Religion*; we will therefore charitably suppose *that opposition* to have been joyned with *inadvertency* of the *ill tendency* of it, *that is*, how unwarrantably it would maim the *notion* of the *former*; and shake the *foundations* of the *latter*. Nor, therefore, ought *that charity*, to be any allay to a *just zeal* for so great concerns.

It seems then, *first*, manifestly repugnant to the *notion of an infinitely perfect Being*, to suppose it less than *simply immense*. For, upon that supposition, it must either be limited, to some certain place, or excluded out of all. The latter of these would be most openly to deny it; as hath, with irrefragable evidence, been abundantly manifested by the most learned Dr, *More*; whereto it would be needless, and vain, to attempt to add any thing. Nor is that the thing pretended to, by the sort of persons I now chiefly intend.

Both in  
his *Dia-*  
*logues* and  
*Enchiridi-*  
*on Meta-*  
*phys.*

And for the former, I would enquire ; Is *amplitude of essence* no perfection ? or were the confining of this Being to the *very minuteſt ſpace we can imagine*, no detraction from the perfection of it ? what if the amplitude of that glorious and ever-blessed Eſſence were ſaid to be only of that extent (may it be ſpoken with all reverence, and reſentment of the unhappy neceſſity we have of making ſo mean a ſuppoſition) as to have been confined unto *that one Temple* to which of old he choſe to confine his *more ſolemn Worſhip* ; that he *could be* eſſentially preſent, only *here* at once, and *no where elſe* ; were this no detraction ? They that think him only to replenish and be preſent by his eſſence in the *hiſheſt heaven* (as ſome are wont to ſpeak) would they not confeſs it were a meaner and much lower thought to ſuppoſe that preſence circumscribed within the ſo unconceivably narrower limits, as the walls of an houſe ? If they would pretend to aſcribe to him *ſome perfection beyond this* ; by ſuppoſing his eſſential preſence commensurable to the vaſter territory of the hiſheſt heavens, even *by the ſame ſuppoſition*, ſhould they deny to him *greater perfection*, than they aſcribe. For the perfection

fection which, in *this kind*, they should ascribe were *finite* only ; but that which they should *deny*, were *infinite*.

Again, they will however acknowledge *omnipotency* a perfection included in the notion of an absolutely perfect Being ; therefore they will grant, he *can create another world* (for *they* do not pretend to believe *this* infinite ; and if they did, by their supposition, they should give away their cause) at any the greatest distance we can conceive from *this* : therefore so far his power can extend it self. But what, his power without his being ? what then is his power ? something, or nothing ? nothing can do nothing ; therefore not make a world. It is then some Being, and whose Being is it but his own ? Is it a created Being ? That is to suppose him *first*, *impotent*, and then to have created *omnipotency*, when he could do nothing. Whence by the way, we may see to how little purpose that distinction can be applyed in the present case of *essential* and *virtual* contact, where the *essence*, and *virtue* cannot but be the same.

But shall it be said, he must in order to the creating such another world, locally move thither where he designs it ?



I ask then, but can he not *at the same time* create thousands of worlds at any distance from this round about it? No man can imagine *this* to be *impossible* to him that *can do all things*. Wherefore of such extent is *his power*, and consequently *his Being*.

Will they therefore say he can *immensely*, if he please, *diffuse his Being*; but he *voluntarily contracts* it; 'Tis answered, that is, *altogether impossible* to a Being, that is, whatsoever it is, by a *simple*, and *absolute necessity*: for whatsoever it is necessarily, it is unalterably, and eternally, or is *pure act*, and in a *possibility* to be nothing, which it already is not. Therefore since God can *every where* exert his power; *he is necessarily*, already, *every where*. And hence, Gods *immensity* is the *true reason* of his *immobility*; there being no *imaginable space*, which he doth not necessarily replenish

*Whence also*, the supposition of his being so confined (as was said) is immediately repugnant to the notion of a *necessary Being*, as well as of an *absolutely perfect*, which hath been argued from it.

We *might moreover add*, that, upon the same supposition, God might truly be

be said to have made a creature *greater than himself*, (for such *this universe* apparently were) and that he can *make one* (as they must confess who deny him not to be *omnipotent*) most unconceivably greater, than *this universe* now is.

Nothing therefore seems more manifest than that God is *immense*; or (as we may express it) *extrinsically infinite*, with respect to *place*; as well as *intrinsically*, in respect to the plenitude of his being and perfection. Only it may be requisite to consider, briefly, what is said against it, by the otherwise minded, that pretend not to deny his infinity in that other sense. Wherein that this discourse swell not beyond just bounds, their strength, *viz.* of argument (for it will not be so seasonable here to discuss with them the Texts of Scripture wont to be insisted on in this matter) shall be viewed as it is collected and gathered up in one of them. And that shall be *Curcellanus*, *De Vocibus Trinit.* who gives it, as succinctly and fully, *&c.* as any I have met with of that sort of men.

The Doctrine it self we may take from him thus. First (on the negative part by way of denial of what we have

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been hitherto asserting) he says, *The foundation* (that is of a distinction of *Maresius's* to which he is replying, for so occasionally comes in the discourse) *viz. the infinity of the Divine Essence, is not so firm as is commonly thought.*

And that therefore it may be thought less firm, he thinks fit to cast a slur upon it, by making it the Doctrine of the *Stoicks*, exprest by *Virgil*, *Jovis omnia plena* (as if it must needs be false because *Virgil* said it, though I could tell, if it were worth the while where *Virgil* speaks more agreeably to *his sense* than *ours*, according to which he might as well have interpreted *this passage*, as *divers Texts of Scripture.* And then *his Authority* might have been of some value) And by *Lucan*, who helps it seems to disgrace and spoil it, *Jupiter est quodcunque vides, quocunque moveris* (he might if he had a mind to make it thought Paganish, have quoted a good many more, but then there might have been some danger it should pass for a *common notion.*) Next he quotes some passages of Fathers that import dislike of it. About which we need not concern our selves. For the *question* is not what *this* or that *man* thought,

And

And then, for the positive account of his own judgment in the case, having recited divers Texts out of the Bible that seem'd as he apprehended to make against him. He would have us believe, that these all speak rather of *Gods providence, and power by which he concerns himself in all our works, words, and thoughts, wheresoever we live, than of the absolute infinity of his Essence.*

And afterwards, *That God is by his Essence in the supreme heaven, where he inhabits the inaccessible light, but thence he sends out from himself a spirit, or a certain force, whether he pleases, by which he is truly present, and works there.*

Unto which purpose speaks at large Volkelius de vera Relig. Quia enim Dei &

*potentia & sapientia ad res omnes extenditur, uti & potestas sive imperium; ideo ubique præsens, omniaque numine suo complere dicitur, &c. l. 1. c. 27. Slichtingius Artic. de filio Dei. Ad Pf. 139. 6, 7. Nec loquitur David de spiritu sancto, qui peculiaris quidem Dei spiritus est, sed de spiritu Dei simpliciter. Nec dicit spiritum istum ubique re esse sed tantum docet nullum esse locum, ad quem is nequeat pertingere, &c. So also F. Socin. Smalcus. And (tho' not altogether so expressly as the rest) Vorstius, Crellius, &c.*

But proceed we to *his Reasons*, which he saith are not to be contemned. We shall therefore not condemn them *so far*, as not to take notice of them; which trouble also the Reader may please to be at; and, afterward, do, as he thinks fit.

### 1. *That*

1. That no difference can be conceived between God and creatures, if God as they commonly speak, be wholly, in every point; or do fill all the points of the universe with his whole Essence. For so whatsoever at all is, will be God himself.

*Answ.* And that is most marvellous that the *in-being* of one thing in another, must needs take away all their difference, and confound them each with other: which, sure, would much rather argue them *distinct*. For certainly it cannot, without great impropriety, be said that any thing is *in it self*: And is both the *container*, and *contained*. How were *these thoughts* in his *mind*? and these *very notions* which he opposes to each other, so as not to be confounded with his *mind*, and consequently with *one another*? So that it's a great wonder he was not of *both opinions*, at once. And how did he think his soul to be in his body, which, though substantially united with it (and that is somewhat more, as we will suppose he knew was commonly held, than to be intimately present) was not yet the same thing. However, himself acknowledges the *power*, and *providence* of God to be *every where*. And then at least every thing must it seems be the *very power*,  
and



and providence of God. But he thought it may be only of confuting the words of *Lucan*, and chastising his *Poetick liberty*. And if he would have been at the pains to turn all their strains and raptures into propositions, and so have gravely fallen to confuting them, he might perhaps have found as proper an exercise for his Logick as *this*. As for his talk of a whole, whereof we acknowledge no parts (as if he imagined the Divine Essence to be compounded of such, he should have said so, and have proved it) 'tis an absurd scheme of speech which may be left to him, and them that use it to make their best of.

2. *No Idolatry can be committed if there be not the least point to be found, that is not wholly full of whole God. For whithersoever worship shall be directed, it shall be directed to God himself, who will be no less there, than in heaven.*

*Answ.* This proceeds upon the supposition that the former would be granted as soon as it should be heard, as a self-evident principle, *that whatsoever is in another, is that in which it is*. And so his consequence were most undeniable. But though we acknowledge God to be *in every thing*, yet so to worship him *in any thing*, as if his essential presence

presence were confined thereto, while it ought to be conceived of *as immense, this is Idolatry*. And therefore they who so conceive of it, as confin'd (or ty'd in any respect, wherein he hath not so ty'd it himself) are concerned to beware of running upon this rock.

3. *Nor can the opinion of Fanaticks be solidly refuted, who call themselves spiritual, when they determine God to be all in all. To do not only good but evil things; because he is to be accounted to be essentially in all the atoms of the world, in whole; and as a common soul by which all the parts of the universe do act.*

*Answ.* We may, in time, make trial whether they can be refuted or no; or whether any solid ground will be left for it. At this time it will suffice to say, that though he be present every where as a *necessary Being*, yet he acts as a *free cause*. And according as his wisdom, his good pleasure, his holiness, and justice do guide his action.

4. *So God will be equally present with the wicked and with the holy, and godly, with the damned in Hell and Devils, as with the blessed in Heaven or Christ himself.*

*Answ.* So he will in respect of his *essential presence*. How he is otherwise

wife (distinguiſhingly enough) preſent in *his Temple*, we ſhall have occaſion hereafter to ſhew.

5. *That I ſay not how ſhameful it is to think, that the moſt pure and holy God ſhould be as much in the moſt naſty places as in heaven, &c.* (I forbear to recite the reſt of this uncleanly argument, which is ſtrong in nothing but ill favour.) But for

*Anſw.* How ſtrange a notion was this of *Holineſs*, by which it is ſet in oppoſition to corporal filthineſs! As if an holy man ſhould loſe, or very much blemiſh his ſanctity, by a caſual fall into a puddle. Indeed if *ſenſe* muſt give us meaſures of God, and every thing muſt be reckoned an offence to him that is ſo to it; we ſhall ſoon frame to our ſelves a God *altogether ſuch a one as our ſelves*. The *Epicureans* themſelves, would have been aſhamed to reaſon or conceive thus of God, who tell us *the Divine Being is as little capable of receiving a ſtroke, as the Inane*. And ſurely (in proportion) of any *ſenſible offence*, we might as well ſuppoſe him in danger, as Dr. *More* fitly expreſſeth it, to be hurt with a thorn, as offended with an *ill ſmell*.

In his  
Dialogues.

We

We have then enough to assure us of Gods absolute *immensity*, and *omnipresence*, and nothing of that value against it, as ought to shake our belief herein. And surely the consideration of *this*, added to *the other* of his perfections (and which tends so directly to facilitate and strengthen our persuasion concerning the rest) may render us assuredly certain, that we shall find him a *conversable Being*. If we seriously apply our selves to *converse with him*, and will but allow him the liberty of *that Temple within* us, whereof we are hereafter (with his leave and help) to treat more distinctly and at large.

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*The End of the First Part.*

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*FINIS.*

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